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ACTION BY THE UNITED NATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE, 1974: MONITORING OF POPULATION TRENDS AND POLICIES, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON REFUGEES

Concise report on the monitoring of world population trends and policies, with special emphasis on refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report is the ninth in a series of periodic concise reviews of world and regional developments in the field of population prepared by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (formerly the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs) of the United Nations Secretariat. The report has been prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1347 (XLV) as well as to a recommendation of the World Population Plan of Action adopted at Bucharest in 1974, which was reaffirmed by the International Conference on Population at Mexico City in 1984.

As requested by the Population Commission at its twenty-sixth session, the present report covers levels and trends in refugee populations and provides a factual basis for investigating their economic and social implications (paras. 1-28). In addition, section II provides a summary of trends and governmental policies in the areas of population growth, mortality, fertility, population distribution and international migration in all countries (paras. 29-126). Finally, section III examines the linkages between population and the environment, focusing on the role of population with regard to land, forests and water (paras. 127-134).

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I. REFUGEES

1. During the 1980s, the number of refugees in the world increased by over 9 million. Increases were particularly marked during the second half of the decade. Thus, between 1985 and 1993, the refugee population more than doubled, rising from 8.5 million to about 19 million (not including refugees under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)). Those estimates are obtained from figures reported to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) by the Governments of asylum countries on the basis of their own records and methods of estimation. Although not all Governments have as yet adopted the United Nations definition of a refugee, by early 1993 about two thirds of the countries in the world were parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or to its 1967 Protocol. According to those international instruments, refugees are persons who are outside of their country of nationality and are unable or unwilling to seek its protection for fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

2. Most refugees in the world have found asylum in developing countries (see table 1). By early 1991, Asia was hosting the largest refugee population in the world, consisting of 7.8 million refugees under UNHCR mandate and 2.5 million Palestinian refugees under the mandate of UNRWA; Africa was hosting 5.4 million refugees, the most rapid increase in the number of refugees since 1985; and Latin America was hosting 0.7 million refugees and displaced persons, a considerable reduction from the previous year, thanks to the peace process in Central America, which had permitted the repatriation of about half of the refugees and displaced persons in the region. Among the developed countries, the countries of permanent resettlement admitted some 1.3 million refugees for resettlement during the 1980s, while in Europe the number of refugees increased by about 200,000 to about 850,000 during 1985-1991. Thus, despite the resettlement of considerable numbers of refugees in developed countries, the resources of countries of asylum in the developing world continued to be taxed by the growing numbers of refugees.

3. A major development during the second half of the 1980s was the rapid increase in the number of persons lodging asylum applications in developed countries. In Europe alone, the number of applications for asylum increased from 67,000 in 1983 to over half a million in 1991. European countries were thus faced with the difficulty of coping with growing numbers of asylum-seekers whose cases sometimes took years to be decided.

Table 1. Number of refugees by region of asylum, 1985-1991

Region of asylum	Early 1985	Early 1990	Early 1991
Developing regions			
Africa	2 929 450	4 442 261	5 412 367
Asia	5 024 981	6 642 069	7 756 243
Latin America	332 350	1 183 239 a/	694 047 a/
Developed region			
Europe	674 000	828 785	856 800

Source: World Population Monitoring, 1993 (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

a/ Including displaced persons.

A. Africa

4. During 1985-1991, the number of refugees in Africa increased sharply, rising from 2.9 million to 5.4 million, an increase of 85 per cent. In addition, the number of African countries hosting more than 100,000 refugees rose from 7 to 14. Such developments were the result of the increased incidence of internal conflict, civil unrest and instability, exacerbated in many instances by the persistence of drought or famine.

5. During the 1980s, eastern Africa hosted the largest concentration of refugees in the continent: 3.4 million persons, or nearly two thirds of the total refugee population in Africa as of 1991. Three countries, Ethiopia, Malawi and Somalia, were each hosting more than half a million refugees (see table 2). Similarly, only a few countries were the major sources of refugees in the continent: in 1991, Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia and the Sudan accounted for 77 per cent of all African refugees.

6. Towards the end of the 1980s, over 1 million people fled Mozambique because of growing insecurity stemming from the activities of the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) and exacerbated by drought. Most found asylum in Malawi, which became the main country of asylum in Africa by early 1991. That year, Ethiopia ranked second as country of asylum and was also a major country of origin of African refugees, most of whom found asylum in Somalia. However, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the civil war that had been raging in Somalia compelled many Somalis to seek asylum in Ethiopia and led to the return of many Ethiopian refugees to their country. By early 1991, Ethiopia was hosting 385,000 Somali refugees. Yet Ethiopia's own situation was far from stable, particularly after the collapse of the Government in 1991, when some Ethiopians fled to neighbouring countries, especially Djibouti and Kenya. In early 1991, Ethiopia was also hosting about 387,000 refugees from the Sudan, most of whom had arrived since 1985.

Table 2. Main countries or areas of asylum and origin for Africa's refugee population, early 1991

Country/region of asylum	Number	Country/region of origin	Number
Malawi	927 000	Mozambique	1 239 043
Ethiopia	772 764	Ethiopia	976 362
Somalia	600 000	Liberia	614 747
Guinea	439 171	Sudan	460 251
Sudan	390 000	Somalia	446 500
Zaire	356 435	Angola	407 242
Côte d'Ivoire	272 284	Rwanda	400 857

Source: World Population Monitoring, 1993 (United Nations publication, forthcoming), table 1.

7. There are several refugee populations in Africa that have spent long periods outside their country of origin. Thus, refugee outflows from Angola date from the 1970s, when the movement to secure independence from Portuguese rule was followed by internal conflict. By early 1991, most Angolan refugees found themselves in Zaire (308,000) and Zambia (99,000). The outflow of Rwandese refugees also started in the 1970s, as a result of ethnic strife. However, their numbers kept on rising during the 1980s so that by 1991 over 400,000 had found asylum in neighbouring countries, particularly in Burundi.

8. The emergence of new areas of conflict during the late 1980s led to sizeable refugee outflows in parts of Africa where the refugee population had remained low until 1985. Thus, as a result of the civil war that had been raging in Liberia since December 1989, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone became, for the first time, important countries of asylum. Not only has a political resolution of the conflict in Liberia been slow in coming, but in March 1991 the conflict spread into the southern and eastern provinces of Sierra Leone, generating an influx of some 97,000 refugees from Sierra Leone into Guinea. In 1989, ethnic conflict at the border between Senegal and Mauritania led to the movement of some 63,000 Mauritanian refugees into Senegal and Mali.

9. For African refugees, resettlement in third countries has rarely been a possible option. The main countries of overseas resettlement have generally adopted relatively low quotas for the admission of refugees from Africa. Voluntary repatriation has therefore been the most widely adopted durable solution to their plight. It is estimated that more than 2 million refugees have been repatriated since 1980. Among recent voluntary repatriation programmes successfully implemented with UNHCR assistance or awareness was the repatriation of Ugandan refugees from the Sudan or Zaire after the change of Government in 1985. More recently, the repatriation in 1989 of some 43,500 Namibians from Angola and Zambia in preparation for their country's independence

was also successful in reducing significantly the number of Namibian refugees in the continent. However, in several cases, repatriation has been either counterbalanced by new refugee outflows or interrupted by conflict. Nevertheless, recent years have witnessed some promising developments regarding the restoration of peace or the achievement of a political settlement, such as the return of political stability in Ethiopia; the accession to independence of Eritrea; the cease-fire agreement in Angola; and the agreements reached in Mozambique. However, as recent developments in Angola have shown, peace in the region is fragile and difficult to attain.

B. Asia

10. During most of the 1980s, Asia was the region hosting the largest number of refugees in the world. Between 1980 and early 1991, the number of refugees in the region increased from 1.2 million to 7.8 million, not including the 2.5 million Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA as of June 1991. Increases in the number of refugees in Asia stemmed mostly from the massive outflow of Afghan refugees to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. Between 1980 and 1991, the Afghan refugee population increased from 400,000 to about 6.2 million. Despite the hopes for repatriation raised by the signature of the Geneva Accords in 1988 and the completion of Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, repatriation prospects have been jeopardized by renewed fighting in that country, especially after the fall of the Government early in 1992.

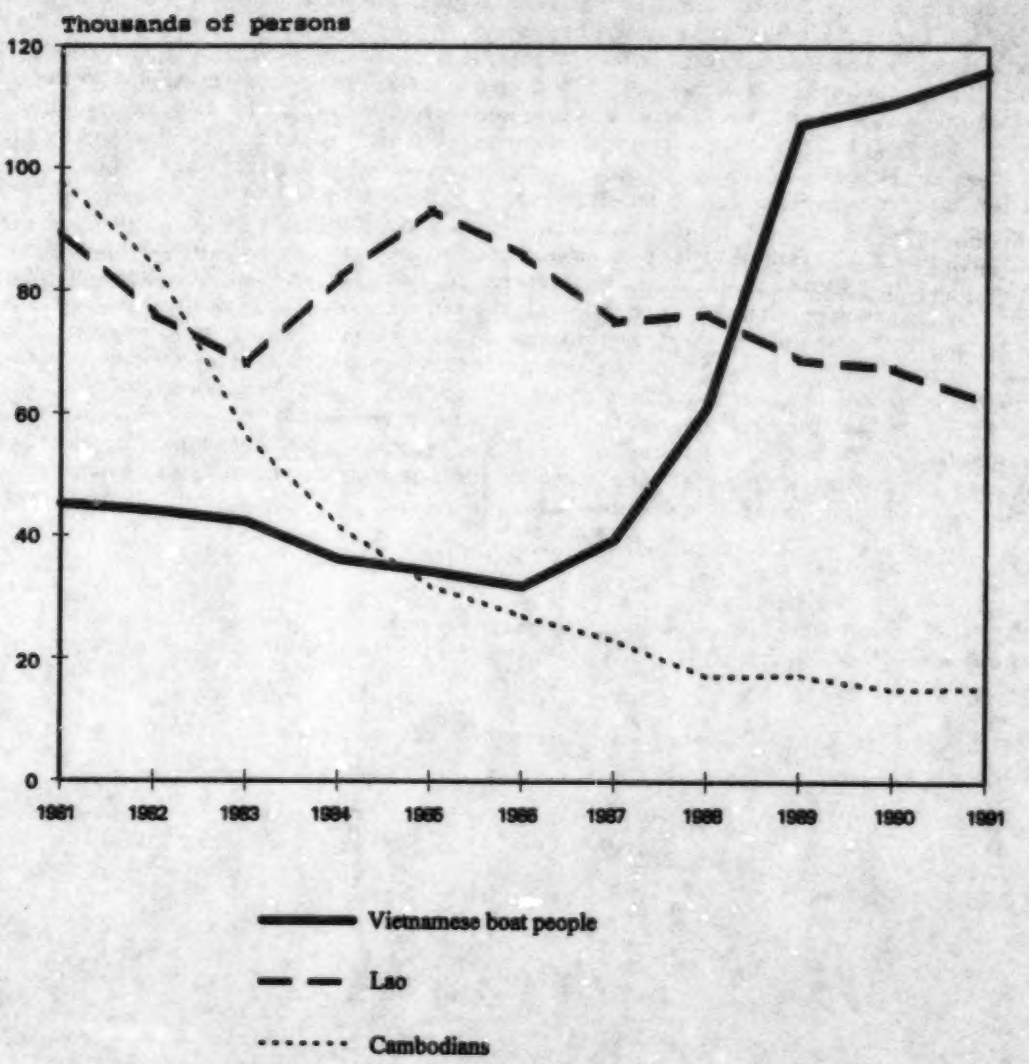
11. In 1990, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait provoked massive population dislocations in the region. Although the majority of persons displaced in the early stages of the conflict were third-country nationals who had been working in Iraq or Kuwait on a temporary basis and who did not qualify for refugee status under international law, their large numbers posed problems akin to those faced by refugees. In total, about 1 million persons left Kuwait and Iraq during 1990, before the allied coalition led by the United States of America entered the conflict in January 1991. The aftermath of the conflict also brought about large outflows of Iraqis. By May 1991, some 1.4 million Iraqis had fled to the Islamic Republic of Iran and about half a million were in Turkey or at the Iraq-Turkey border. In order to protect the civilian population of Iraq, a demilitarized zone along the Iraq-Kuwait border was established in April 1991 under the aegis of the United Nations and United Nations humanitarian centres were established in Kurdish areas of Iraq. Such an unprecedented international intervention made possible the rapid repatriation of Iraqi refugees from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkey. By July 1991, 252,000 Iraqi refugees remained in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

12. By early 1991, 527,000 refugees, mostly of Indo-Chinese origin, were present in eastern and south-eastern Asia. That number includes 287,000 Vietnamese refugees who had been permanently resettled in China but excludes the estimated 370,000 displaced Cambodians who in 1991 were living in camps on the border between Cambodia and Thailand. The Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement, signed in Paris on 23 October 1991, led to elections in Cambodia in 1993 and made possible the eventual repatriation of Cambodians. In a parallel development, new plans regarding a phased return of Lao refugees from Thailand

were considered at a tripartite meeting of UNHCR and the Governments of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Thailand held in June 1991.

13. During most of the 1980s, resettlement in third countries was the major solution for the plight of Indo-Chinese refugees. It is estimated that since 1975, when the outflow of Indo-Chinese refugees started, over 1.2 million have been resettled overseas. Viet Nam has been the major source of refugees in the region; during the late 1980s, most Vietnamese seeking asylum fled by boat to neighbouring countries. Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand were the major destinations of Vietnamese asylum-seekers and by early 1991 Hong Kong was hosting over half of all boat people in the region. Because of growing concern about the increasing numbers of boat people in south-eastern Asia, an International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees was held in Geneva in June 1989 (see figure I). At the Conference, the Comprehensive Plan of Action was adopted. The Plan called for an expansion of the Orderly Departure Programme allowing would-be asylum-seekers to leave Viet Nam for resettlement abroad. Furthermore, the Plan prompted the adoption of individual screening procedures for Vietnamese asylum-seekers in all countries of the region. Whereas prior to 15 March 1989 Vietnamese boat people had been granted refugee status on a group basis, as of that date proof of a well-founded fear of persecution on an individual basis became a requirement. Largely as a result of such changes, in 1990 the number of persons leaving Viet Nam through the Orderly Departure Programme surpassed the number arriving by boat in other countries of the region for the first time since 1986.

Figure I. Indo-Chinese refugees and asylum-seekers registered in centres of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in east and south-east Asia, 1 January 1981-31 July 1991



Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (unpublished data).

C. Latin America

14. When the Governments of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua agreed on a procedure for establishing a firm and lasting peace in Central America at Guatemala City in August 1987 about 1 million refugees and displaced persons were estimated to be in the region, although only 150,000 were refugees receiving UNHCR assistance. The success of the peace process in Central America led to a rapid repatriation of refugees and displaced persons, so that between 1990 and 1991 their numbers declined by nearly half.

15. By early 1991, the major countries of asylum in Latin America were Costa Rica and Mexico. In 1990, the Government of Mexico amended its General Population Act to include the term "refugee" in its provisions. According to the amended Act, eligibility for refugee status was extended to persons threatened by general violence, foreign aggression, internal conflict, massive human rights violations and other circumstances that had greatly upset public order in their country of origin. Such changes raised hopes that Mexico might grant refugee status to the substantial numbers of externally displaced persons it hosted.

16. During the 1980s, El Salvador, Guatemala and especially Nicaragua were the main countries of origin of refugees in Central America. Recent developments that have triggered new refugee outflows in the region include the 1989 political conflict in Panama and its associated economic difficulties, which contributed to an influx of Panamanian refugees into Guatemala; the upsurge of civil strife in El Salvador in 1989, which made Salvadorians flee to neighbouring Belize and Guatemala; and the overthrow of the elected Government of Haiti in 1991, which led to the outflow of boat people seeking asylum in the United States of America. To counterbalance such outflows, successful repatriation drives occurred in El Salvador and Nicaragua, especially after the 1990 change of Government in Nicaragua.

17. Compared to Central America, the number of refugees in South America has remained relatively stable since the early 1980s. There were about 15,000 refugees in South America by early 1991, over 50 per cent of whom had found asylum in Argentina. The majority were of European, Chilean and Uruguayan origin. The 1990 change of Government in Chile contributed to the return of Chilean refugees, mostly from Argentina.

D. Europe

18. During the late 1980s, although the annual number of applications for asylum submitted in European countries increased substantially, rising from 167,000 in 1985 to over half a million in 1991, relatively few persons were granted refugee status. Consequently, the number of refugees reported in the region increased from 674,000 in 1985 to 856,000 in 1991. During 1985-1991, the six European countries receiving the largest number of asylum applications were Austria, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: about three quarters of all asylum claims filed in Europe were lodged in those countries.

19. Given that receiving countries were not prepared for the sharp rise in asylum applications, backlogs in their processing were common. To reduce case-loads and prevent the abuse of the asylum system, a series of measures were adopted by the Governments of receiving countries, including fining airlines transporting passengers without appropriate documentation; returning asylum-seekers to any country through which they might have transited and that could have provided them with asylum; and streamlining asylum adjudication procedures to reduce backlogs. In addition, in 1992 member States of the European Community signed the Dublin Convention, which established criteria to determine the State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the countries of the Community, thus preventing claims from being filed simultaneously in several States.

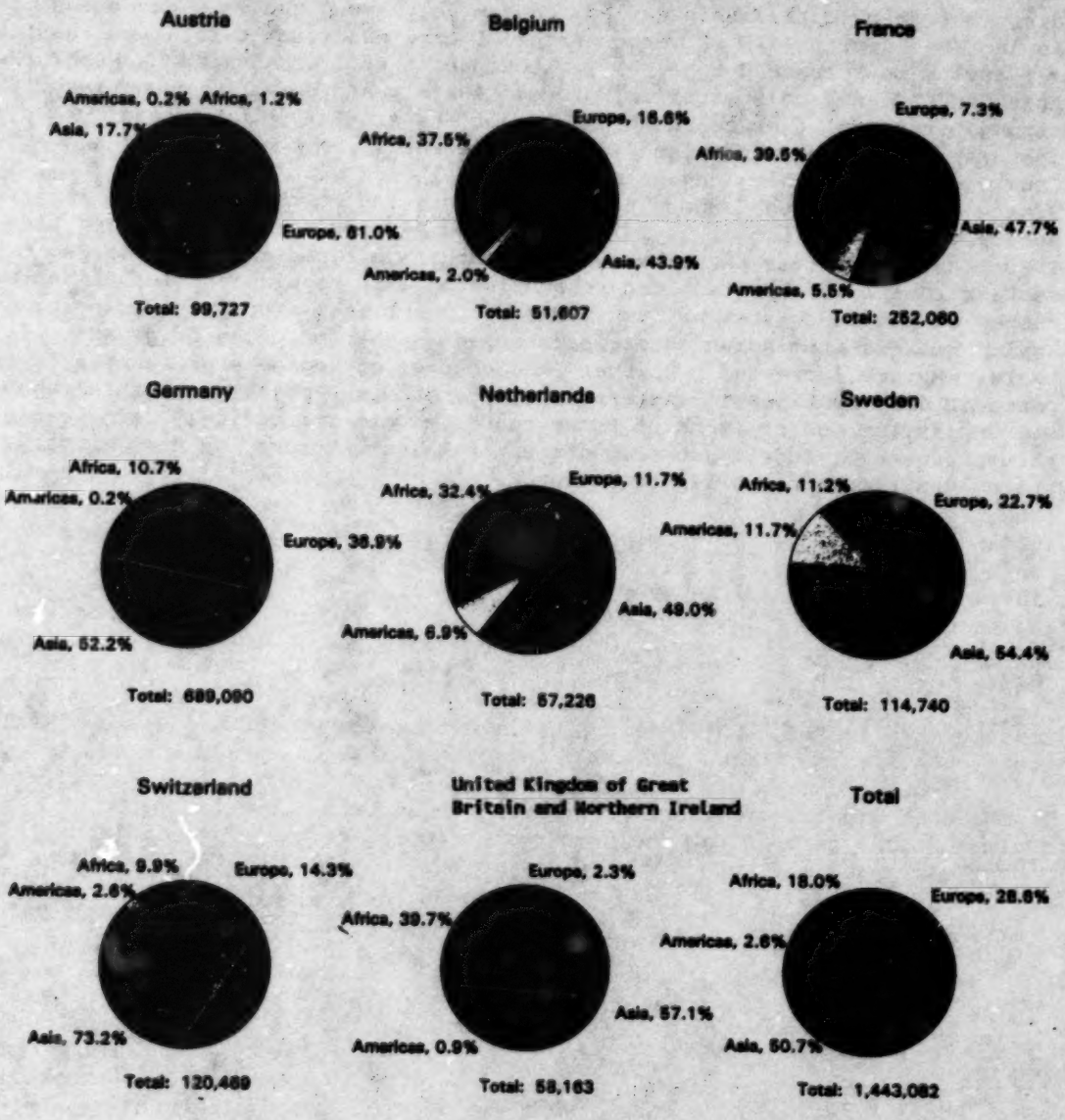
20. During the 1980s, Germany was the European country receiving the largest number of asylum applications (nearly 1 million). In 1991 alone, 256,000 applications were filed in Germany, representing 47 per cent of all applications lodged in Europe. Germany attracted such a large proportion of the asylum-seekers in Europe partly because the right to asylum was enshrined in its constitution. However, on 1 July 1993, an amended law restricting the admission of asylum-seekers went into effect in Germany. The new law allows German authorities to prevent the entry of asylum-seekers through third countries that are considered safe and to reject the asylum applications of persons whose countries of origin have been declared secure under German asylum provisions. Preliminary data on asylum requests indicate that their number fell after the law went into effect.

21. France, with nearly 300,000 applications for asylum during 1983-1991, ranked second among European countries in terms of applications received. Since 1989, however, the number of asylum applications filed in France has been declining, partly because of the introduction of a transit visa for nationals of countries producing numerous asylum-seekers and partly because asylum-seekers are no longer allowed to work. Sweden, the country ranking third in terms of applications filed during 1983-1991 (170,000), decided to tighten its asylum adjudication procedure in 1989 by granting refugee status only to persons fitting the 1951 Convention definition. However, in 1990, of the 12,800 cases granted asylum only 15 per cent qualified as Convention refugees.

22. Other European countries have also adopted new asylum laws or revised adjudication procedures in an effort to reduce the case-load of asylum applications. Some Governments, including those of Belgium and Switzerland, have decided to return asylum-seekers to their countries of nationality if the latter are considered safe, that is, if they are deemed to respect basic human rights in a general way. In addition, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have simplified the asylum adjudication procedure to reduce processing time. In Italy, legislation adopted in 1991 allows the rejection of asylum-seekers arriving through third countries. Moreover, following the arrival of large contingents of Albanian asylum-seekers by boat, the Government of Italy began interdicting potential asylum-seekers at sea and returning them to Albania. The cooperation of the Government of Albania in keeping its citizens at home was fostered by Italy's provision of considerably more aid to that country.

23. During 1983-1990, most of the persons seeking asylum in Europe were citizens of Asian (51 per cent) or European countries (29 per cent), although their distribution by citizenship varied considerably among the main countries of asylum (see figure II). Five countries of origin accounted for about half of all asylum-seekers in Europe: Islamic Republic of Iran, Sri Lanka and Turkey in Asia, and Poland and Romania in Europe. Austria and Germany, countries with strong historical ties to the countries of eastern Europe, received comparatively high proportions of asylum-seekers from those countries. Countries that had had long-standing colonial ties with Africa, such as Belgium, France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, received a substantial proportion of asylum claims from African citizens. During the 1980s, as the process that led to the eventual collapse of communist regimes in eastern Europe accelerated, the relaxation of exit regulations led an increasing number of people to seek asylum in Western countries. Thus, the proportion of asylum-seekers from Asian countries dropped as that of those originating in eastern Europe increased. However, the changes of regime that eventually took place in the countries of eastern Europe removed the major acceptable reason for seeking asylum and citizens of those countries are increasingly being denied refugee status. Indeed, some countries of eastern Europe, such as Hungary, have themselves become countries of asylum.

Figure II. Distribution of asylum-seekers in selected European countries, by region of citizenship, 1983-1990 a/



Source: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (unpublished tabulations).

a/ Excluding stateless and not stated nationality.

E. The countries of permanent resettlement

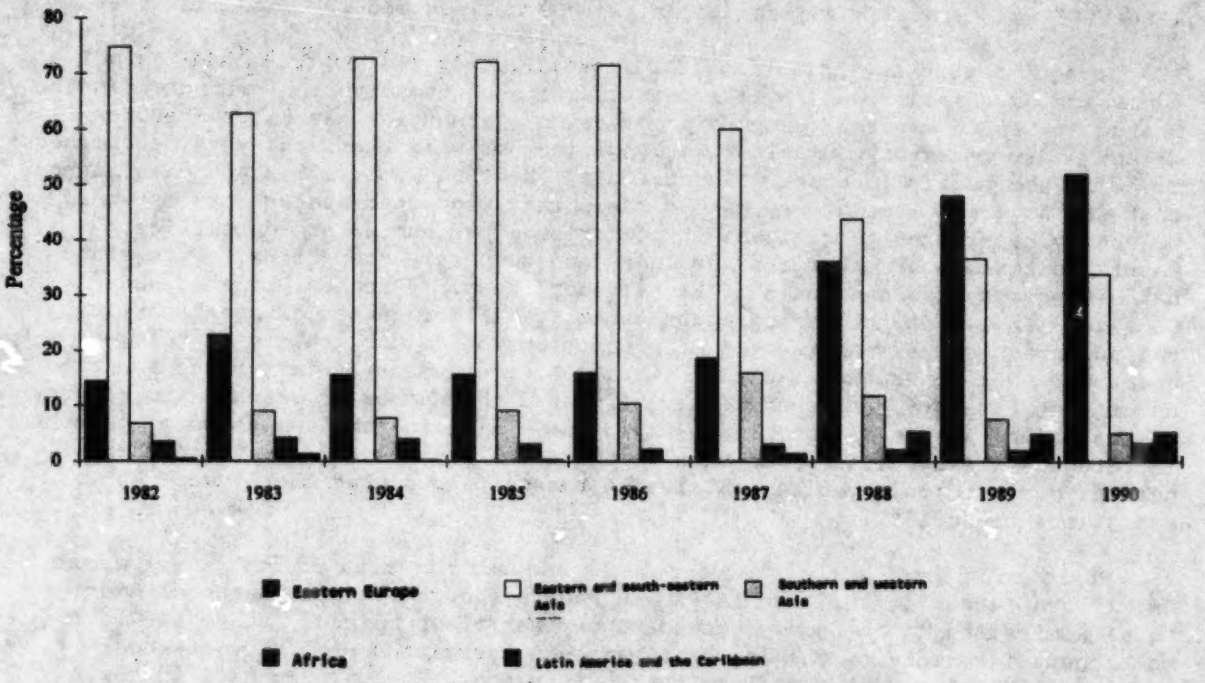
24. In accordance with their character as countries allowing immigration for permanent resettlement, Australia, Canada and the United States of America have also granted resettlement opportunities to very substantial numbers of refugees. The United States of America alone admitted over 1 million refugees during the 1980s. Canada admitted 223,000 refugees or persons in need of protection during 1980-1989 and Australia admitted over 124,000 between mid-1980 and mid-1988.

25. In addition to the admission of refugees, all three countries allow the admission of persons in refugee-like situations on humanitarian grounds. In the United States of America, temporary admission or "parole" can be granted to aliens under emergency humanitarian conditions or when their entry is determined to be in the public interest. Furthermore, the 1990 Immigration Act establishes that the Attorney-General may extend "temporary protected status" or "extended voluntary departure" to citizens of countries experiencing armed conflict, natural disasters or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. Such status has been granted to nationals of El Salvador, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia and Somalia. In Canada, the immigration category of "designated classes" permits the admission of persons in need of protection who do not qualify as refugees under the 1951 Convention. During the 1980s, the number of immigrants admitted under that category has consistently surpassed the number of refugee admissions. In Australia, a special humanitarian programme allowing the admission of persons in refugee-like situations has been in operation since 1981, and the number of persons admitted on humanitarian grounds has surpassed that of refugee admissions since 1987.

26. While in Australia the sum of refugee and humanitarian admissions remained fairly stable during the late 1980s, in Canada and the United States of America total admissions in the equivalent category has risen markedly since 1987. In both countries, most of the increase has been associated with the growing numbers of displaced persons originating in eastern Europe. Indeed, in the United States of America, the number of refugees from eastern and south-eastern Asia, which had accounted for the major share of refugee admissions during most of the 1980s, was surpassed by the number of refugees from eastern Europe in 1989 (see figure III).

27. During the 1980s, the rising number of asylum applications filed in the resettlement countries taxed considerably the systems in place to process them. Although Australia received only 1,300 applications for asylum in 1991, by the end of the year it had accumulated a backlog of nearly 23,000. In the United States of America, the number of asylum applications has increased markedly since 1985. However, the number of cases adjudicated has remained considerably lower. Overall, during 1980-1990 the United States of America received 469,000 asylum applications, 201,000 of which were adjudicated and only a quarter of which were approved. In order to reduce processing time, the United States immigration authorities established new asylum procedures in 1990 and a corps of specially trained asylum officers was created to process asylum requests.

Figure III. Distribution of actual refugee approvals by area of chargeability, United States of America, 1982-1990



Source: Government of the United States of America, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (Washington, D.C., various years).

28. In September 1991, the overthrow of the Government of President Aristide in Haiti led to the flight of numerous Haitians. Most of them left by boat with the intention of seeking asylum in the United States of America but were interdicted at sea by the United States Coast Guard. Although some were returned to Haiti, a large number were taken to the United States naval base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, where their asylum applications were pre-screened by immigration officers. To prevent further departures by boat, in January 1992 the United States Government started processing asylum requests at its Embassy in Port-au-Prince. In May of that year, the pre-screening of asylum requests of newly interdicted Haitians was eliminated and they were repatriated to Haiti.

II. POPULATION TRENDS AND POLICIES

A. Population growth

1. Trends

29. The population of the world was estimated to be 5.5 billion persons at mid-1992. It is currently growing at a rate of 1.7 per cent per annum, which means that an additional 93 million persons were added to the world total population during 1992.

30. The world population more than doubled between 1950 and 1992, rising from 2.5 billion to 5.5 billion. By the end of the twentieth century, the total population will further increase by an additional 749 million to reach 6.2 billion, and by the year 2025, the medium-variant projections indicate that world population may reach 8.5 billion (see table 3).

Table 3. World populations medium variant: 1950-2025

Year	Population
1950	2.5
1990	5.3
1992	5.5
2000	6.2
2025	8.5

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.7).

31. The world population growth rate has held steady at about 1.7 per cent per annum since 1975 (see table 4). Two factors contributed to ending the decline in population growth that had preceded: a stagnation in the decline of total fertility and a change in the age structure of the population. The stagnation in the decline of total fertility is largely attributable to: (a) a stagnation in the decline of the total fertility of the two largest populations in the world - those of China and India - between 1975-1980 and 1980-1985; and (b) the fact that whereas significant fertility declines had started in many developing countries around 1970, significant fertility declines started in only a few new countries during the period 1975-1985.

Table 4. World population growth and annual increment, medium-variant projections, 1990-2025

Period	Annual increment (millions)	Annual growth rate (percentage)
1950-1955	47	1.8
1965-1970	72	2.1
1975-1980	74	1.7
1985-1990	88	1.7
1990-1995	93	1.7
1995-2000	94	1.6
2020-2025	85	1.0

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.7).

32. There have been marked differences in population growth rates between the more developed and the less developed regions since at least 1950. During 1950-1955, the growth rate of the more developed regions was 1.3 per cent per annum, while that of the less developed regions was 2.0 per cent, about 60 per cent higher. During that period, the less developed regions were at the beginning of the demographic transition. Thus, from 1950-1955 to 1965-1970, the population of the less developed regions grew very fast, their growth rate increasing from 2.0 to 2.5 per cent per annum. From 1965-1970 to 1975-1980, however, that growth rate declined from 2.5 to 2.1 per cent per annum, holding steady at 2.1 per cent through 1985-1990. The growth rate of the more developed regions, on the other hand, decreased from 1.3 per cent per annum in 1950-1955 to 0.6 per cent in 1985-1990. As a result of those trends, the gap between the growth rates of the more developed and the less developed regions increased from 0.7 percentage points in 1950-1955 to 1.5 percentage points in 1985-1990.

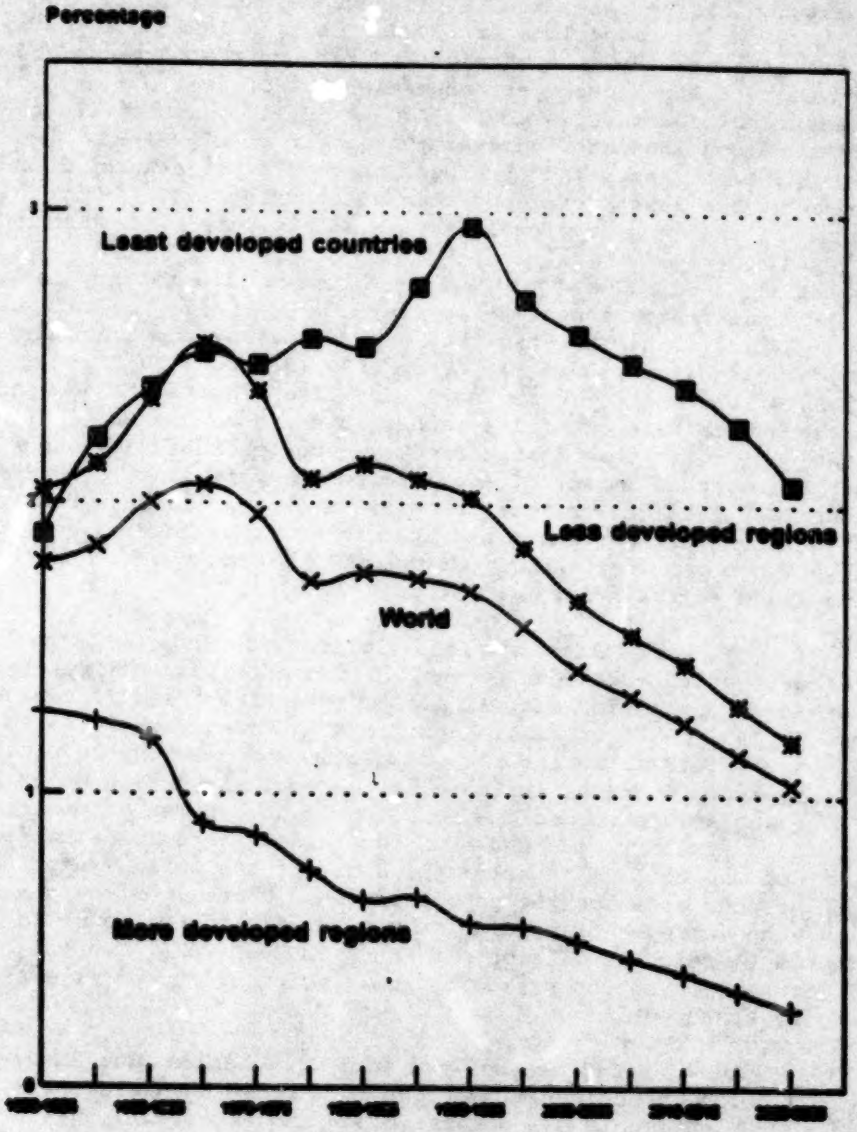
33. Beyond 1990, the population growth rates in both the more developed and the less developed regions are expected to resume a declining trend up to the end of the projection period in 2020-2025 (see figure IV). The world population growth rate is expected to decrease to 1.6 per cent per annum during 1995-2000; beyond 2000, it is expected to decline to 1.0 per cent in 2020-2025 in the medium-variant projections. By 2025, the growth rate of the more developed regions is projected to be 0.2 per cent per annum and that of the less developed regions 1.2 per cent. By contrast, among the least developed countries the growth rate is expected to continue its increasing trend up to 1990-1995, when it may peak at 2.9 per cent per annum and then decline to 2.1 per cent by 2020-2025. The growth rate of the least developed countries during 1985-1990 is higher than the growth rate of the less developed regions at any period between 1950 and 2025.

34. In 1985-1990, all the major regions except Africa had population growth rates lower than their respective levels in 1950-1955. The current rate of growth for Africa is higher than that experienced by any other major area during the past 40 years (see figure V). From 1990-1995 to 2020-2025, growth rates of major areas of the world, including Africa, are expected to decline. However, by 2025 the growth rate of Africa is projected to be higher (still above 2 per cent per annum) than that currently experienced in any other major area, despite the projected impact of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) in some countries. The growth rate in Asia, Latin America and Oceania may converge to about 0.9 per cent per annum and that in northern America and the former USSR to about 0.5 per cent per annum. Europe will probably continue its long-term declining trend to reach zero growth in 2020-2025.

35. In 1950-1955, 47 million people, a little less than half the current annual increase, were added each year to the world population. Fifty-eight per cent of that increase occurred in Asia, 11 per cent in Africa and 10 per cent in Latin America. In 1985-1990, 88 million people were added each year, 92 per cent of that increase occurring in the less developed regions. By 2020-2025, Africa's share of the average annual increase in the world is projected to increase to 38 per cent and Asia's to decline to 50 per cent. Lower growth rates in Latin America should result in its share of population increase being reduced to 7 per cent of the total. In all major areas of the world except for Africa, the number of persons added to the population should decline from current numbers. In Africa, the increase of population was 18 million per annum in 1985-1990 but is projected to reach 32 million per annum in 2020-2025. On the other hand, by the end of that projection period the population of Europe is expected to be declining by 8,000 per annum.

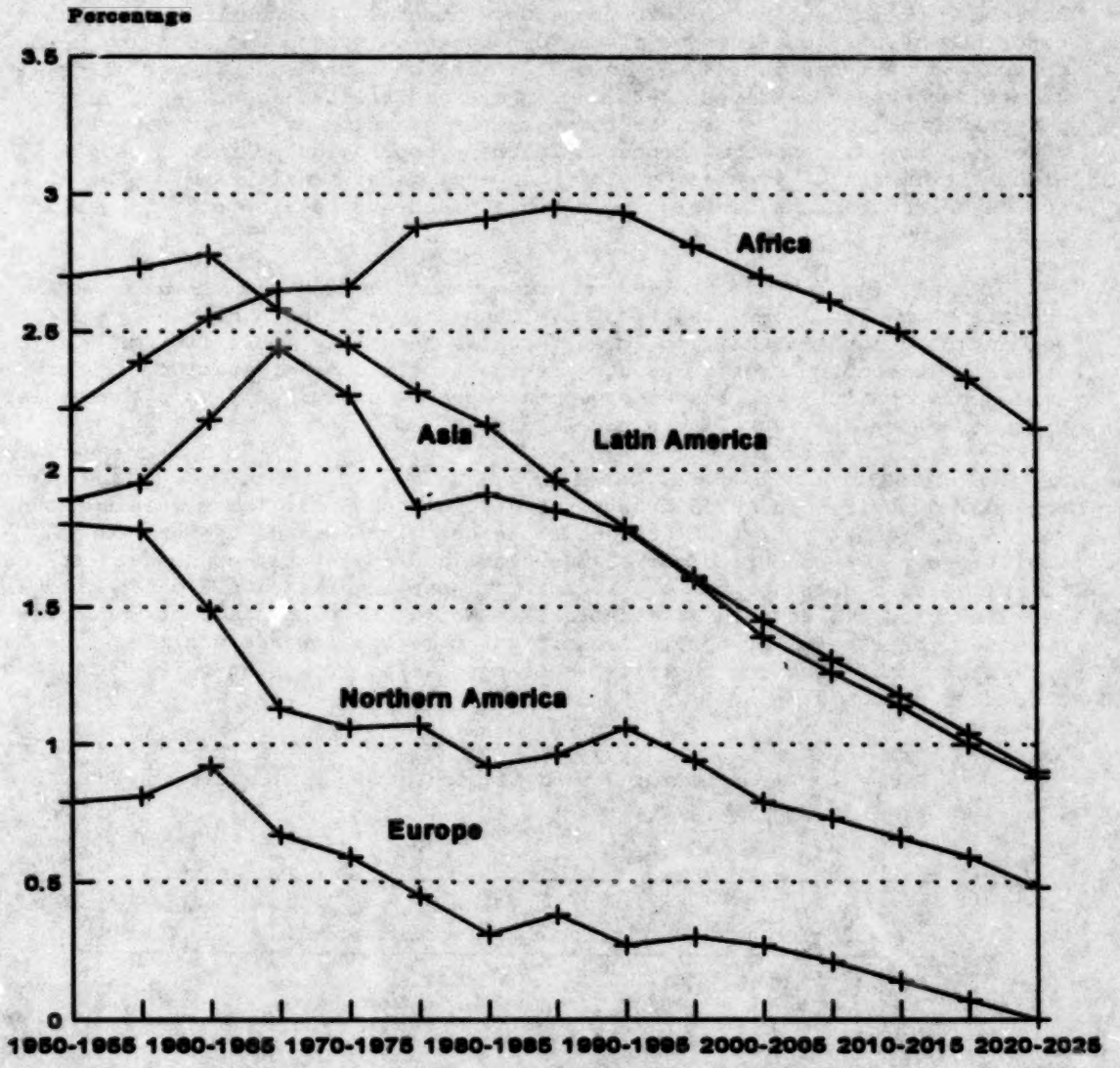
36. In 1992, about 60 per cent of the world population were living in the 10 largest countries in the world. Of the 10 largest countries, six were in Asia (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Pakistan), one in Latin America (Brazil), one in Africa (Nigeria), one in northern America (the United States of America) and one in Europe (the Russian Federation); all had populations that exceeded 100 million. In 2025, it is expected that there will be 16 countries with populations of over 100 million, comprising two thirds of the world population. Current high growth rates in a large number of countries will result in a burgeoning population for those countries in 2025 with the result that the ranking of countries according to population size should change somewhat.

Figure IV. Growth rates: more developed and less developed regions and least developed countries, 1950-2025



Source: World Population Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.7).

Figure V. Growth rates: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Northern America, 1950-2025



Source: World Population Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.7).

2. Policies

37. Population issues, and in particular those related to population growth, have been of increasing concern among Governments. The number of countries concerned by the consequences of rapid population growth and adopting policies to address them has increased; in particular, an increasing number of developing countries have expressed concern over those and related issues at several international forums. More Governments, for example, are giving special attention to environmental concerns in their population policies, especially since the impact of population growth on ecological equilibrium was highlighted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in particular in its Agenda 21. 1/

38. In contrast to former practices many countries currently address demographic questions openly. Some countries have chosen to address a single component of population growth in their policies, such as fertility, mortality or migration; others have adopted broader strategies that include consideration of education, employment, health, the status of women, access to family planning services, infrastructure and sustainable development.

39. As of 1993, only a small number of countries, 21 out of 190 (11 per cent), considered their population growth rates to be too low. The remaining countries were nearly equally divided between those that considered the rate to be satisfactory (86 countries, or 45 per cent) and those that considered it to be too high (83 countries, or 44 per cent). Those figures have evolved gradually over the past two decades (see table 5). While the percentage of countries that consider their rates of population growth to be too low has declined, the percentage that consider their rates of population growth to be too high has steadily increased.

Table 5. Governments' views of population growth rates, 1993

(Percentage)

Year	Too low	Satisfactory	Too high	Total	Number of countries
1974	25.0	47.4	27.6	100.0	156
1983	18.5	45.2	36.3	100.0	168
1986	16.5	45.3	38.2	100.0	170
1989	14.7	45.3	40.0	100.0	170
1991	13.8	43.7	42.5	100.0	174
1993	11.0	45.3	43.7	100.0	190

Source: World Population Monitoring, 1993 (United Nations publication, forthcoming), table 1.

40. In terms of population size, the 83 countries that consider their rates of population growth to be too high (see table 6) represent almost 70 per cent of the world population. Among them are six of the 10 most populous countries in the world, namely, China, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nigeria; their Governments all implement policies to lower the rates. The other four most populous countries of the world, the United States of America, Brazil, the Russian Federation and Japan, which together account for 11 per cent of the world population, consider their rates of population growth to be satisfactory. The 86 countries that consider their population growth to be satisfactory represent altogether less than 30 per cent of the world population. The remaining 21 countries, which consider population growth to be too low, constitute less than 5 per cent of the world population. Nearly 90 per cent of the more developed countries consider their rates of population growth to be satisfactory and 13 per cent consider their rates to be too low. In fact, the average annual rate of population growth for the developed regions was 0.6 per cent for the period 1985-1990. Among the more developed countries that consider their rates of population growth to be too low, it is interesting to note the entry into this category of the newly independent countries of eastern Europe. A major concern of many developed countries is the steady decrease in fertility and the subsequent ageing of the population associated with the spectre of population decrease. An interesting exception is The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the only developed country that considers its rate of population growth to be too high.

41. The majority (61 per cent) of the developing countries consider their rates of population growth to be too high. The highest proportion of countries that consider their rates to be too high is found in Africa, followed by Oceania, Latin America and Asia. Indeed, Africa and Asia have some of the highest population growth rates in the world. In Africa, 72 per cent of the countries consider their rates of population growth to be too high, whereas only one country, Gabon, considers its rate of population growth to be too low. In Asia, only 50 per cent of the countries consider their population growth rates to be too high, partly as a result of the distinctive approach to population growth in western Asia, where six of the 14 developing countries that consider their rates of population growth to be too low are concentrated. Many of those countries have population growth rates higher than 3 per cent but feel that their countries are underpopulated in relation to their resources and development goals.

42. In Latin America, the distribution of perceptions of population growth follows a geographical pattern. Most of the 17 countries that consider population growth to be too high are small, densely populated countries in the Caribbean or in Central America. Most of the 14 countries that consider their population growth to be satisfactory are large countries located in South America. The two countries that consider their population growth to be too low, Argentina and Uruguay, are also located in South America. Governments of countries in South America mainly perceive economic and social development as the best way to influence demographic phenomena. Therefore, they have generally refrained from addressing population issues directly; rather, they have adopted policies to improve the economic situation of the country, which they believe will in turn influence population trends.

Table 6. Governments' overall appraisals of rates of population growth: number of countries and percentage of total, by level of development and major area, 1993

	Rates too low (1)	Rates satis-factory (2)	Rates too high (3)	Total (1+2+3)	Rates too low (4)	Rates satis-factory (5)	Rates too high (6)	Total (4+5+6)
	(number of countries)				(percentage)			
Level of development								
World	21	86	83	190	11	45	44	100
More developed regions	7	48	1	56	13	86	2	100
Less developed regions a/	14	38	82	134	10	28	61	100
Least developed countries	3	12	32	47	6	26	68	100
Region								
Africa	1	14	38	53	2	26	72	100
Latin America	2	14	17	33	6	42	52	100
Northern America	0	2	0	2	0	100	0	100
Asia	10	9	19	38	26	24	50	100
Europe	5	33	1	39	13	85	3	100
Oceania	1	4	8	13	8	31	62	100
USSR (former)	2	10	0	12	17	83	0	100

Source: The Population Policy Data Bank maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

a/ Including least developed countries.

43. The large majority of developing countries in Oceania (eight out of 11), consider their rates of population growth to be too high and have adopted population policies based on the concept of sustainable development. Those countries are small island countries with attitudes towards population issues similar to those prevalent in the Caribbean region.

44. The 12 countries that composed the former USSR have rates of population growth that range widely between zero per cent per annum for the Republic of Moldova to 2.5 per cent per annum for Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Since their recent independence, only a few countries have begun to formulate or implement individual population policies. Action in the demographic field has been delayed due to other priorities in the economic and social field.

B. Mortality

1. Trends

45. The second half of the twentieth century witnessed an impressive increase in the expected length of life in the world. Global life expectancy at birth increased by 18 years, from 46.4 years in 1950-1955 to 64.7 years in 1990-1995 (see table 7). In the more developed regions, life expectancy at birth increased by nearly nine years since the early 1950s to reach 75 years in 1990-1995; in the less developed regions, it increased by more than twice as much, nearly 22 years, and is expected to reach 62 years in 1990-1995, although that life expectancy would still be 13 years short of the 75 years prevalent in the more developed regions. Although the least developed countries have also experienced substantial increases (nearly 15 years) in their life expectancy at birth since the 1950s, they are expected to reach only 50.2 years in 1990-1995; there is therefore a great potential to extend the average life-span of the population in those countries.

46. Considerable variation in the life expectancy at birth exists among the less developed regions. Africa is expected to have a life expectancy of 53 years in 1990-1995; Asia, of 65 years; and Latin America, of 68. Among the regions constituting the developed world, life expectancy in the early 1950s varied only between 64 and 65 years. In 1990-1995, however, the average life-span in Europe, northern America and Australia-New Zealand is expected to exceed 75 years, while in the former USSR and eastern Europe it is expected to exceed 70 years.

47. Life expectancy in each of the countries of the more developed regions increased by at least two years between 1980 and 1990. In 1990, the average life expectancy of women exceeded 70 years, while in 22 countries, it actually exceeded 80 years. Infant mortality rates in the developed countries continued to decline during the 1980s. By 1990, infant mortality was below 10 deaths per 1,000 births in 22 countries, although Albania, Romania, the former USSR and Yugoslavia still registered infant mortality rates above 20 deaths per 1,000 births.

48. The increases in the disparity between male and female life expectancy observed in the early 1980s appear to have halted or even been reversed in northern European countries. In northern Europe, as well as in Australia, Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States of America, the narrowing sex differentials in life expectancy can be attributed mainly to the increase in female deaths caused by lung cancer. In eastern European countries and the former USSR, however, sex differentials in life expectancy continue to increase, partly because mortality caused by ischaemic heart disease increased more among men than among women.

49. Reliable estimates of life expectancy are still not available for a large number of developing countries. Available data show that in Africa, only Algeria, Mauritius, Réunion and Seychelles had an estimated life expectancy exceeding 60 years during the 1980s. In Asia, there were nine countries with a life expectancy exceeding 70 years in the 1980s; in Latin America, there were 10. Hong Kong had the highest expectancy, 77 years in 1987-1989, while

Table 7. Estimates of life expectancy, infant mortality, under-five mortality and maternal mortality for major areas and regions of the world, various periods between 1985 and 1995

Major area or region	Life expectancy (both sexes) 1990-1995	Infant mortality 1990-1995	Under-five mortality (probability of dying by age 5) 1985-1990	Maternal mortality 1988
World	64.7	62	97	370
More developed regions	74.6	12	17	26
Less developed regions	62.4	69	110	420
Africa	53.0	95	158	630
Asia	64.8	62	99	380 a/
Europe	75.2	10	13	23
Latin America	68.0	47	67	200
Northern America	76.1	8	11	12
Oceania	72.6	22	33	600 b/
USSR (former)	70.4	20	29	45

Sources: Life expectancy, infant mortality and under-five mortality: World Population Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.7); maternal mortality: World Health Organization, Maternal and Safe Health Programme, Maternal Mortality Ratios and Rates: A Tabulation of Available Information, 3rd ed. (Geneva, 1991).

a/ Excluding Japan.

b/ Excluding Australia and New Zealand.

estimates in Cyprus, Cuba, Israel and Puerto Rico reached 75 years during the 1980s. At the other extreme, Botswana, Burundi and Zaire in Africa, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Nepal in Asia, and Kiribati in Oceania, all had an estimated life expectancy at birth below 60 years at some point during the 1980s.

50. In the few developing countries that had estimates for more than one point in time in recent decades, an increase in life expectancy was observed: in China, a gain from 68 years in 1981 to 72 years by 1986, an increase of almost a year per annum; in Bangladesh and India, an increase of one and one half years per annum, respectively, during the 1970s and 1980s; in Latin America, a modest increase in life expectancy in Mexico during the 1970s and more significant gains in Chile and Colombia.

51. During the 1980s, infant mortality levels among the developing countries with data available ranged widely. In Burkina Faso, Burundi, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Zaire and Zambia in Africa, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan in Asia, and Haiti in Latin America, they exceeded 100 deaths per 1,000 live births; while in Réunion, Brunei Darussalam, Hong Kong, Israel, Martinique and Singapore, they stood at 10 or less.

52. During the 1980s, infant mortality declined in all the countries with data that allow the calculation of trends. Infant mortality declined in Algeria from 80 to 58 deaths per 1,000 live births between 1983 and 1990; in Botswana from 72 to 54 between 1981 and 1984; and in Zimbabwe from 83 to 59 between 1980 and 1986. Five countries in Asia - Bangladesh, Iraq, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Turkey - as well as the Marshall Islands in Oceania, registered declines of more than 15 infant deaths per 1,000 live births. Of those, Bangladesh, Maldives and Turkey had started the decade with infant mortality rates above 100 per 1,000 in the early 1980s. In Maldives and Turkey, infant mortality declined to 52 and 68 infant deaths per 1,000 births respectively; in Bangladesh, however, it has remained above 100. In Latin America, infant mortality in Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Peru declined by more than 20 infant deaths per 1,000 births during the 1980s. In Haiti, the country with the highest mortality in the region, infant mortality declined from 132 in 1980 to 109 deaths per 1,000 births in 1985.

53. In general, countries with high infant mortality rates also had high under-five mortality rates (deaths to children under age 5 per 1,000 live births). Botswana, Mauritius and Zimbabwe in Africa, Bangladesh, Maldives and Turkey in Asia, and El Salvador, Haiti and Peru in Latin America, all recorded declines of more than 30 deaths per 1,000 live births in under-five mortality rates during the 1980s.

54. According to estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO), in 1988 over half a million women died from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, of whom the vast majority - 99 per cent - lived in developing countries. The maternal mortality rate for the developed countries as a whole was 26 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1988. In contrast, the rate in the less developed countries was estimated to be 420 deaths per 100,000 births for the same period. Rates registered recently in the developed countries are below 10 deaths per 100,000 births, except in Romania and the former USSR, where in 1990 there were 83 and 41 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, respectively. Reliable estimates of maternal mortality rates from registered data are available for only 13 developing countries. In Hong Kong, Israel, Kuwait and Singapore, rates were comparable to those in the developed countries (all below 10 per 100,000). Among the eight Latin American countries with data available, Puerto Rico had the lowest rate (20 maternal deaths per 100,000 births) and Argentina the highest (49). Mauritius, the only African country with reliable estimates of maternal mortality, had a rate of 99 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1987.

55. The spread of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) throughout the world is a major source of concern. WHO estimates that by 1993, between 10 million and 12 million adults had been infected with HIV, the causal agent of AIDS, since the outbreak of the epidemic. WHO places the number of AIDS cases at

2.5 million and estimates that globally more than 1 million adults have died from AIDS. In addition, about half a million children have been infected with HIV by their infected mothers.

56. The majority of HIV-infected persons live in the developing countries. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, there are an estimated 7 million persons infected with HIV and 1.5 million persons with AIDS. The countries most affected by the epidemic are Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In Asia and Latin America, the spread of HIV is more recent. Yet by 1993, estimates of HIV-infected persons reached 1 million in Latin America and nearly 1.5 million in Asia. Thailand and India are countries where the number of people infected with HIV is expected to increase rapidly. In the developed countries, where the population initially affected by the epidemic consisted mostly of drug users and homosexual men, the infection is increasingly being spread through heterosexual contact.

2. Policies

57. Among the developed countries, policy concerns have focused on the health needs of the growing elderly populations and on diseases connected with individual life styles and environmental conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancer. In the developing countries, population policies have addressed morbidity and mortality levels, as many countries have adopted the WHO policy of Health for All by the Year 2000 and focused on the improvement of the health of their populations; the improvement of the quality and quantity of health services; the prevention, control and treatment of major communicable diseases; the improvement of the nutritional status of the population, especially that of mothers and children; and adequate production, supply and distribution of essential drugs and vaccines.

58. In Africa, where over 90 per cent of countries consider their current levels of mortality to be unacceptable, many Governments have set quantitative targets for mortality levels, some planning to reduce mortality by as much as 50 per cent by the year 2000 (see table 8). Two population groups whose mortality levels are of particular concern in most African countries are infants and children under the age of five, and women of child-bearing age. Conditions or diseases that are of major concern to the majority of countries in Africa include diarrhoeal diseases, respiratory infections, AIDS, malaria and malnutrition, as well as, to a lesser extent, complications related to pregnancy, tuberculosis, measles and diseases of early childhood.

Table 8. Governments' views of acceptability of mortality level, by level of development, 1992

(Percentage of countries)

Level of development	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Total	Number of countries
World	32.6	67.4	100.0	190
Developed countries	48.2	51.8	100.0	56
Developing countries	26.1	73.9	100.0	134

Source: The Population Policy Data Bank maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

59. Over half of all countries in Latin America consider their life expectancy to be unacceptable. The health situation in Latin America has been affected by the worsening economic situation in many countries of the region, involving devaluation, inflation and an overall deterioration of living standards. All countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region have adopted national health policies and strategies that are consistent with the strategy of primary care and health for all. However, the adjustment of those policies and strategies has been limited by financial, human and material restrictions as well as, in some countries, by political and social instability.

60. In recent years, the Asian region has been experiencing a rapid rise in lifestyle-related diseases and pressing environmental health issues. Diseases of the heart and vascular system pose a major health challenge in most parts of the region. Conditions or diseases that are of major concern to the majority of the developing countries in Asia include diarrhoea, respiratory infections, nutritional problems in children, complications related to pregnancy, communicable diseases, malaria and tuberculosis. The developed countries in Asia are concerned with such conditions as AIDS, cancer, neoplasms, cardiovascular diseases and vehicular accidents. AIDS is also a major concern for many countries in Asia; most have adopted special measures to prevent or reduce its occurrence. Policies have also been adopted to improve health and reduce morbidity and mortality levels.

61. The countries of Europe are primarily concerned with cardiovascular diseases, cancer and malignant neoplasms; most are also very concerned with AIDS. In recent years, tuberculosis has been making a powerful comeback in a number of western European countries, particularly among underprivileged groups. Many European countries have health promotion programmes aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles and eliminating or reducing preventable conditions.

62. Among the leading causes of death in Oceania are heart disease, malignant neoplasms, accidents and cerebrovascular diseases; some countries also report high incidence of diarrhoeal diseases, intestinal infectious diseases,

respiratory diseases, diabetes and sexually transmitted diseases. In some areas, malaria, tuberculosis, hepatitis, measles and meningitis, as well as perinatal deaths, are also quite common. Some countries also reported AIDS as being a concern. Moreover, many countries are concerned about unequal access to health care and are striving to reduce social and ethnic inequalities in health status.

63. The health care systems of the former Soviet Republics are reported to be inadequate and obsolete. Although facilities are reasonably spread out in cities and towns, they are very deficient in the rural areas. Currently, there is widespread disruption of equipment and medical supplies as well as a serious drop in production due to shortages of raw materials and hard currency.

C. Fertility

1. Trends

64. Considering the world as a whole, total fertility rates (TFRs) have declined between 1980-1985 and 1985-1990 from an average of 3.6 to 3.4 children per woman, that is, by 5.6 per cent. But that world average conceals many regional differences, the most important of which is the disparity between the TFRs of the more developed and the less developed regions of the world. Indeed, in 1985-1990, while the TFR for the more developed regions was 1.9 births per woman, that for the less developed regions was 3.9 (see table 9).

65. Within each region, noteworthy differences also exist. Among the less developed regions, fertility is highest in Africa, where in 1985-1990 TFR averaged 6.9 children per woman in eastern and western Africa and 6.5 children in middle Africa. In a number of countries in those two subregions, TFRs exceeding seven births per woman were not uncommon (see United Nations, forthcoming b, annex, table). With 4.5 births per woman, southern Africa has the lowest fertility in the African continent, followed by northern Africa, with 5.1. In northern and southern Africa, fertility fell by about 10 and 8 per cent respectively from 1980-1985 to 1985-1990, but TFR changes in the other subregions were negligible.

66. By 1985-1990, the total fertility for Asia averaged 3.5 births per woman. That figure conceals subregional differences: with a TFR of 5.0, western Asia exhibits the highest fertility, while eastern Asia exhibits the lowest, 2.3 births per woman. South-eastern Asia and southern Asia are characterized by TFRs of 3.7 and 4.7 respectively. Between 1975-1980 and 1980-1985, the decline in fertility was sharpest in eastern Asia and south-eastern Asia, where reductions of 14 and 12 per cent respectively have been estimated. Fertility was lowest in eastern Asia, mainly because of the sharp decline experienced in recent years by China. Between 1980-1985 and 1985-1990, rapid fertility decline continued in south-eastern Asia but slackened in eastern Asia as a result of a levelling-off of Chinese fertility. In southern Asia, by contrast, declines were concentrated in the more recent period.

67. Latin American fertility averaged 3.4 births per woman during the period 1985-1990. Between 1980-1985 and 1985-1990, fertility declined from 4.6 to 3.9 in Central America and from 3.8 to 3.3 in South America, giving Latin America during that period the largest fertility decline (13 per cent overall) among the less developed regions. The Caribbean, with three births per woman, currently displays the lowest fertility of the region.

68. The observed reductions in the number of births per woman did not, however, bring about a comparable reduction in the average annual number of births, notably as a result of the growing numbers of women of reproductive age born during previous high fertility decades who, due to improved mortality rates, are increasingly surviving to adulthood. Indeed, the annual number of births has been growing and recent estimates show that it is expected to continue to do so in the next quinquennial period. In Africa, notably, almost 45 per cent more births are expected to occur annually during the period 1990-1995 than occurred during 1975-1980 (see figure VI). Hence, in that region, the contribution of

Table 9. Estimated fertility rates and percentage change, major world areas and regions: 1975-1980, 1980-1985 and 1985-1990

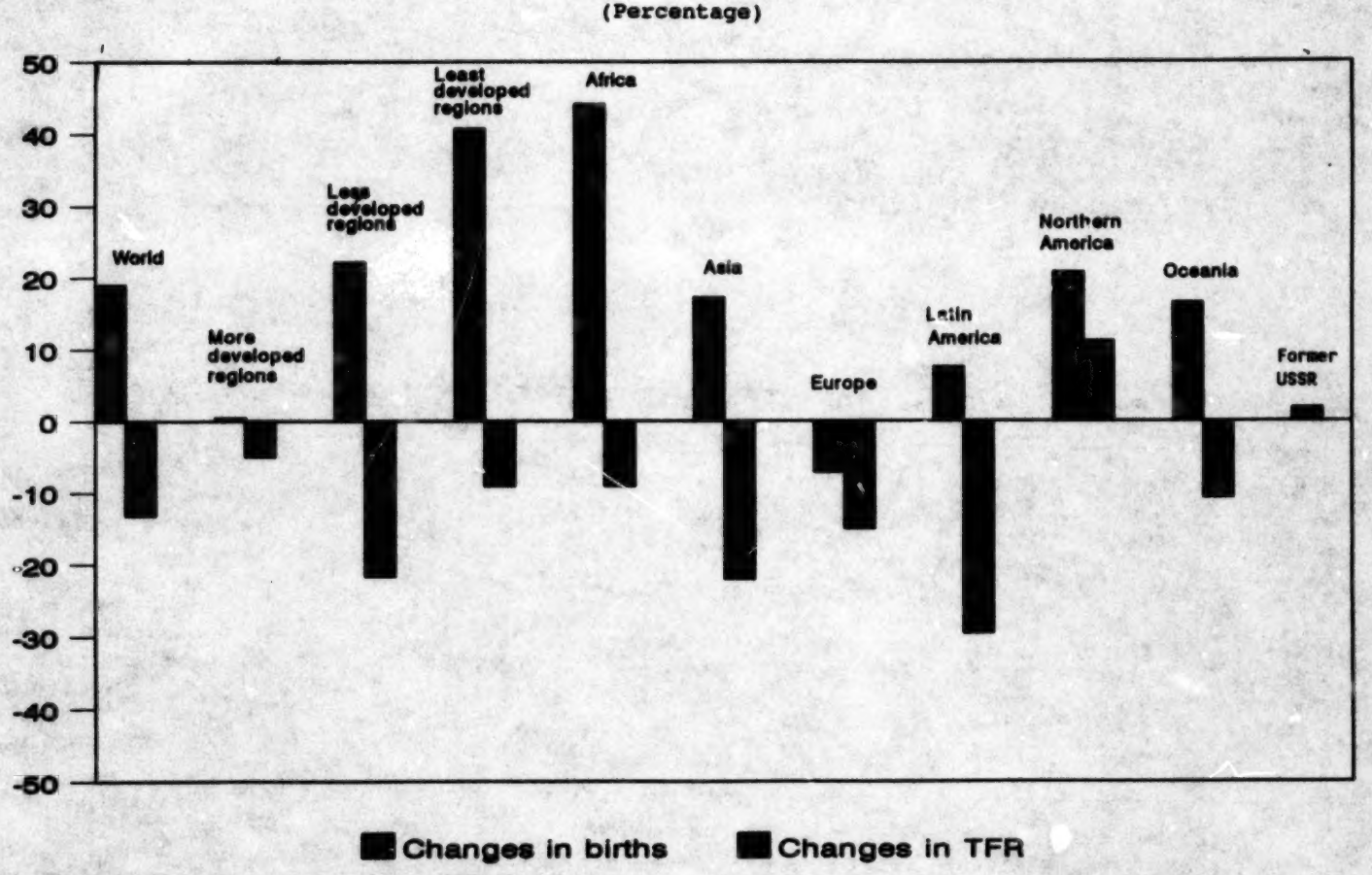
Major area and region	Total fertility rates			Percentage change		
	1975-1980	1980-1985 (estimated)	1985-1990	1975-1980 to 1980-1985	1980-1985 to 1985-1990 (estimated)	1975-1980 to 1985-1990
World total	3.8	3.6	3.4	-5.3	-5.6	-10.5
More developed regions	2.0	1.9	1.9	-5.0	0.0	-5.0
Less developed regions	4.6	4.2	3.9	-8.7	-7.1	-15.2
Least developed countries	6.6	6.4	6.1	-3.0	-4.7	-7.6
Africa	6.6	6.4	6.3	-3.0	-1.6	-4.5
Eastern Africa	7.0	6.8	6.9	-2.9	1.5	-1.4
Middle Africa	6.4	6.5	6.5	1.6	0.0	1.6
Northern Africa	6.0	5.7	5.1	-5.0	-10.5	-15.0
Southern Africa	5.2	4.9	4.5	-5.8	-8.2	-13.5
Western Africa	6.9	6.9	6.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asia	4.1	3.8	3.5	-7.3	-7.9	-14.6
Eastern Asia	2.8	2.4	2.3	-14.3	-4.2	-17.9
South-eastern Asia	4.8	4.2	3.7	-12.5	-11.9	-22.9
Southern Asia	5.3	5.2	4.7	-1.9	-9.6	-11.3
Western Asia	5.6	5.3	5.0	-5.4	-5.7	-10.7
Europe	2.0	1.8	1.7	-10.0	-5.6	-15.0
Eastern Europe	2.3	2.2	2.1	-4.3	-4.5	-8.7
Northern Europe	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Southern Europe	2.3	1.8	1.5	-21.7	-16.7	-34.8
Western Europe	1.7	1.6	1.6	-5.9	0.0	-5.9

/...

Major area and region	Total fertility rates			Percentage change		
	1975-1980	1980-1985 (estimated)	1985-1990	1975-1980 to 1980-1985	1980-1985 to 1985-1990 (estimated)	1975-1980 to 1985-1990
Latin America	4.4	3.9	3.4	-11.4	-12.8	-22.7
Caribbean	3.5	3.2	3.0	-8.6	-6.3	-14.3
Central America	5.2	4.6	3.9	-11.5	-15.2	-25.0
South America	4.2	3.8	3.3	-9.5	-13.2	-21.4
Northern America	1.8	1.8	1.9	0.0	5.6	5.6
Oceania	2.8	2.6	2.5	-7.1	-3.8	-10.7
USSR (former)	2.3	2.4	2.4	4.3	0.0	4.3

Source: World Population Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.7), annex, table A.12.

Figure VI. Comparison of change in total fertility rates and in average annual number of births, major areas, 1975-1980 (estimated) to 1990-1995 (projected) a/



Source: World Population Monitoring, 1993 (United Nations, forthcoming).

a/ Medium variant.

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African births to the world total number of births is expected to increase from 17.1 per cent in 1975-1980 to 20.7 per cent in 1990-1995 (United Nations, forthcoming b). Similar opposite trends in fertility rates and number of births are also expected to prevail in Asia, Oceania and Latin America, although on a much smaller scale.

69. In the more developed regions, TFRs are substantially below the population replacement level of 2.1 births per woman in 1985-1990 and only small differences characterize the different subregions. In western Europe, TFR currently stands at 1.6 births per woman, having slowly evolved downwards since the mid-1960s or early 1970s. On the other hand, nearly the same fertility rate prevails in southern Europe, but the onset of that decline occurred in the late 1970s. Indeed, in southern Europe TFR fell from 2.3 in 1975-1980 to 1.5 in 1985-1990, producing successive reductions in TFR of about 22 per cent and 17 per cent. In 1991, that subregion encompassed two countries, Italy and Spain, with the lowest TFRs ever recorded: 1.26 and 1.28 respectively (United Nations, forthcoming b).

70. In northern Europe, a somewhat higher TFR of 1.8 is observed, and has remained fairly constant on the average (see table 9). Recent observed data, however, suggest a slight upward trend in the Scandinavian countries, notably in Sweden where TFR reached the population replacement level of 2.1 in 1990 and 1991 (United Nations, forthcoming b, table 2). Slight fertility increments are also reported between 1975-1980 and 1985-1990 in northern America (5.6 per cent) and in the former USSR (4.3 per cent). Since 1950, average TFRs in the former USSR have never fallen below population replacement level, although large differences exist between the former European and Asian Republics. Current estimates for 1985-1990 reveal that in the newly independent States of the former USSR, TFRs vary from about 2.0 to more than 4.0, reaching as high as 5.4 in Tajikistan (United Nations, forthcoming b).

71. It should be underscored that, contrary to the situation in the less developed regions, in the developed countries the number of births is expected to decline concomitantly with the fall in fertility rates, except in northern America and in the developed countries of Oceania (see figure VI).

72. The rising use of contraception is the main proximate determinant of the ongoing fertility decline in the developing countries and there is a strong relationship between fertility levels and contraceptive prevalence - defined as the level of current use among couples in which the woman is of reproductive age. In the early 1960s, when the TFR in the developing regions averaged 6.1 children per woman, the level of contraceptive prevalence was probably no higher than 10 per cent in the developing countries; at present, over 50 per cent of couples are using contraception. Based on recent data, the level of current contraceptive use is 54-56 per cent in Asia and Latin America but only 17 per cent in Africa (see table 10). Prevalence levels are below 20 per cent in most of the least developed countries, but there are four exceptions: Bangladesh, Botswana, Nepal and Rwanda. In the more developed regions, the average prevalence level is 71 per cent.

Table 10. Average prevalence of specific contraceptive methods, by region, in or about 1987

Region	All methods	Modern methods a/	Sterilization		Pill	Injectable	IUD	Condom	Vaginal barrier methods	Rhythm	With-drawal	Other methods
			Female	Male								
A. Percentage of couples with the woman of reproductive age												
World	53	44	16	4	7	1	11	5	1	4	4	1
Less developed regions	48	44	18	5	5	1	12	3	0.3	2	1	1
Africa	17	13	1	-	7	1	3	1	0.2	2	1	1
Northern Africa	31	27	2	-	16	0.3	8	1	0.3	2	2	1
Sub-Saharan Africa	13	9	1	-	4	2	1	0.5	0.2	2	1	1
Asia and Oceania b/	53	49	21	6	4	1	14	3	0.3	2	1	1
East Asia b/	72	71	28	8	3	0.2	29	2	0.4	1	0.2	0.3
Other countries	40	34	16	5	4	1	4	4	0.3	2	2	2
Latin America	57	47	20	1	16	1	6	2	1	5	3	1
More developed regions	71	47	8	4	14	-	6	13	2	9	13	2
B. Percentage of contraceptive users												
World	100	83	29	8	14	2	20	9	1	7	8	2
Less developed regions	100	91	37	9	11	2	25	5	1	4	3	2
Africa	100	79	9	-	40	8	18	4	1	9	5	6
Northern Africa	100	88	6	-	51	1	25	4	1	5	5	2
Sub-Saharan Africa	100	70	11	-	28	16	10	4	1	13	6	11
Asia and Oceania b/	100	92	39	11	7	2	27	6	1	3	2	2
East Asia b/	100	98	39	11	5	0.3	40	3	1	1	0.2	0.4
Other countries	100	85	39	11	11	4	11	9	1	6	5	4
Latin America	100	84	36	1	28	2	11	4	1	9	6	2
More developed regions	100	66	11	6	20	-	8	18	3	13	19	2

Source: World Contraceptive Use Data Diskettes, 1991 (ST/ESA/SER.R/120); and data files maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

Note: Estimates reflect assumptions about contraceptive use in countries with no data (see text).

a/ Including male and female sterilization, pill, injectables, IUD, condom and vaginal barrier methods.

b/ Excluding Japan.

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73. Most developing countries with trend data available show a substantial increase in contraceptive use. Very rapid increases have not been as common during the most recent period as during the 1970s to early 1980s, but the general picture is still one of sustained, rapid growth in contraceptive prevalence. In over 60 per cent of the developing countries for which trends have been measured, contraceptive prevalence has been rising by over 1 per cent of couples per annum. Although there remain many African countries in which levels of use are still very low, surveys conducted in the past few years have added evidence of increasing use of contraception in sub-Saharan Africa; countries recording substantial recent increases in levels of contraceptive use include Botswana, Cameroon, Kenya, Lesotho, Rwanda and Zimbabwe.

74. Relatively effective clinical and supply methods 2/ account for approximately 80 per cent of contraceptive use world wide. Sterilization alone accounts for one third of all contraceptive use, with female sterilization being practised roughly four times as often as male sterilization (vasectomy). Clinical and supply methods make up a larger fraction of contraceptive use in the developing than in the developed countries. However, it should be noted that in many of the developed countries, the latest available information dates from the 1970s. Modern contraceptive methods have been replacing older methods, especially coitus interruptus, in many European countries, although in much of eastern and southern Europe and in the former USSR, traditional methods are still predominant.

75. There has been rapid progress in extending the availability of contraception in the developing countries. The most widely available methods have been condoms and the pill, estimated to be readily available to roughly 70 per cent of the population of the developing countries in 1989. Female sterilization and intra-uterine devices (IUDs) were judged to be readily available to 62-65 per cent of the population, and male sterilization to 57 per cent. About half of the population were estimated to have ready access to safe abortion services.

76. Despite the rapid spread of contraceptive practice, unwanted births still constituted about one fourth of total fertility at the time of surveys conducted in the developing countries in the late 1980s. Although fertility levels have fallen, the number of children desired has sometimes fallen even faster. In 15 developing countries where trends can be compared, the percentage of married fecund women who currently wanted no more children rose by an average of 10 percentage points between the world fertility surveys conducted in the 1970s and the demographic and health surveys conducted approximately a decade later. The average number of children wanted declined by an average of 20 per cent.

2. Policies

77. Three years into the final decade of the twentieth century, 45 per cent of the countries in the world view their level of fertility as being too high (see table 11). That number represents 67 per cent of the world population. The gradual shift towards viewing fertility as being excessive (40 per cent of all countries held that view in 1986) is the continuation of a long-term trend that

Table 11. Governments' views of the fertility level, 1976-1993

(Percentage)

Year	Too low	Satisfactory	Too high	Total	Number of countries
1976	11.5	53.2	35.3	100.0	156
1983	13.1	45.2	36.9	100.0	168
1986	14.1	50.0	40.0	100.0	170
1989	12.4	45.9	44.1	100.0	170
1993	11.6	43.7	44.7	100.0	190

Source: The Population Policy Data Bank maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

was already under way during the period 1976-1983, when the percentage increased slightly from 35 to 37 per cent. The percentage of countries that view fertility as too low dipped from 13 per cent in 1983 to 12 per cent in 1993, while the percentage of those that view fertility as satisfactory declined from 45 to 44 per cent between 1983 and 1993.

78. Trends in policies undertaken to influence the level of fertility closely parallel countries' views of their fertility levels. The percentage of countries intervening to lower fertility increased from 26 to 41 per cent between 1976 and 1993, while the percentage of countries intervening to raise fertility increased slightly during the same period from 9 to 12 per cent. The percentage of countries with a policy of non-intervention declined sharply from 51 to 33 per cent.

79. Such a global analysis, however, masks much of the diversity that is apparent at a lower level of aggregation. For example, as of 1993, while 63 per cent of the developing countries view their fertility level as too high, only a single developed country holds this perception. Slightly more than two thirds of the developed countries (70 per cent) view their fertility as being satisfactory. Those developing countries (7 per cent) that view their fertility as too low are for most part countries with relatively small populations and low population densities.

80. Among the world's regions, Africa has experienced the greatest number of changes in national fertility policies. Since 1991, eight African countries (the Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania) have begun implementing policies to lower rates of fertility, bringing the number of countries in Africa that have policies to lower fertility to 36 out of a total of 53.

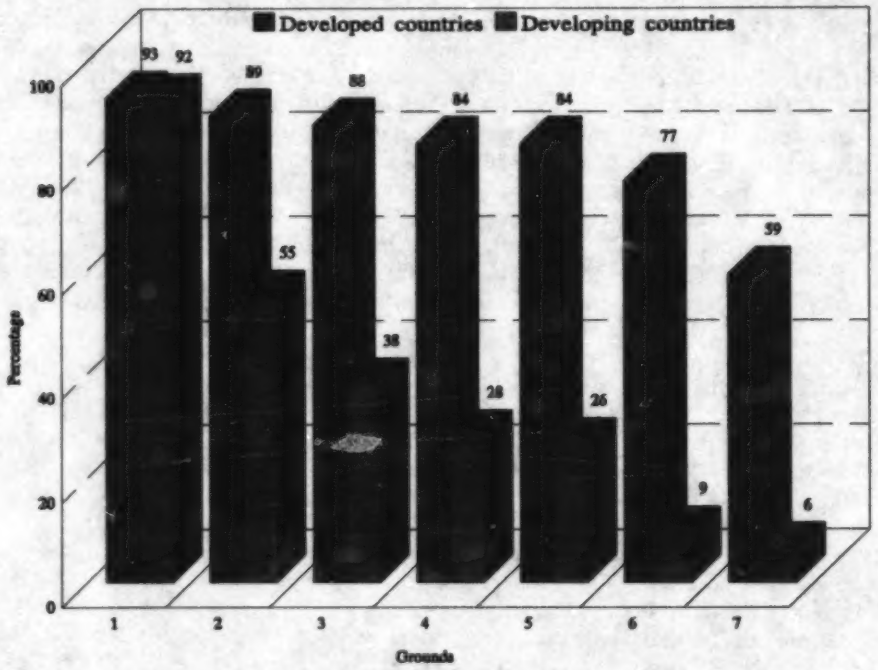
81. Governments' policies concerning effective use of modern methods of contraception are important determinants of both reproductive behaviour and maternal and child health. Direct support entails the provision of family-planning services through Government-run facilities, such as hospitals, clinics, health posts and health centres, as well as field workers. As of 1993, more than three fourths of all countries (82 per cent) provided direct support, while 7 per cent provided indirect support and 10 per cent provided no support. Two per cent of countries have only limited access to contraception. Those developments represent a dramatic shift towards government support for contraception since the United Nations World Population Conference in 1974, when 55 per cent of all countries supported contraceptive methods directly, 15 per cent provided support indirectly, 22 per cent gave no support and in 2 per cent access to contraceptive methods was limited. Despite the pervasiveness of direct government support for modern methods of family planning, the demand for family-planning services is still believed to outstrip the supply. In 1990, for example, it is estimated that 300 million women in the developing countries did not have ready access to safe and effective means of contraception.

82. One of the oldest and widely utilized methods to limit the number of births is induced abortion. It is estimated that between 36 million and 53 million induced abortions are performed annually, of which 15 million are believed to be clandestine abortions. According to a United Nations study on abortion policies (United Nations, 1992a, 1993 and forthcoming a), based on the information available for 186 countries, the overwhelming majority of countries (92 per cent) permit abortion in order to save the woman's life. The countries not permitting abortion to save the woman's life are Chile and Malta, where abortion is prohibited under any circumstances. In a number of other countries, the laws on abortion prohibit abortion under any circumstances, but other laws, decrees or codes permit abortion under certain circumstances. Examples of such countries are the Central African Republic, the Dominican Republic, Egypt and the Philippines, where general principles of criminal law permit abortion to save the woman's life; Colombia, Mauritius and San Marino, where legal interpretation generally permits abortion to save the woman's life; Honduras, where the Code of Medical Ethics permits it to save the woman's life; and Nepal where rules of the Medical Council permit it. Abortion to preserve the woman's physical health is permitted in 121 countries (65 per cent). Fewer countries, 98 (52 per cent), allow abortion to preserve the woman's mental health and 83 countries (45 per cent) permit it when pregnancy has resulted from rape or incest. The number declines to 81 countries (44 per cent), when there is the possibility of foetal impairment and to 55 countries (30 per cent) for economic or social reasons. Finally, in 41 countries (22 per cent) abortion is available upon request.

83. Disaggregating the 186 countries by level of development reveals significant differences in abortion policies between the developed and the developing countries (see figure VII). For example, of the 56 developed countries, 77 per cent permit abortion on all grounds except "on request". In contrast, among the 130 developing countries, the percentage permitting abortion varies considerably. Whereas 92 per cent of the developing countries permit abortion to save the woman's life, only 9 per cent permit abortion for economic or social reasons, against 77 per cent of the developed countries. Again, while

Figure VII. Grounds on which abortion is permitted, by level of development

(Percentage)



Sources: Abortion Policies: A Global Review, vol. I, Afghanistan to France (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.XIII.8); vol. II, Gabon to Norway (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XIII.2); vol. III, Oman to Zimbabwe (United Nations publication, forthcoming).

1. To save the life of the woman
2. To preserve physical health
3. To preserve mental health
4. Rape or incest
5. Foetal impairment
6. Economic or social reasons
7. Available on request

only 6 per cent of the developing countries permit abortion "on request", 59 per cent of the developed countries do so. Based on the information received from the 186 countries, data indicate that abortion policies are significantly more restrictive in the developing than in the developed countries.

84. Unsafe abortion has been estimated by WHO to cause as many as one fourth to one third of maternal deaths world wide and often causes lasting damage to the health of the women who survive. Nearly all those deaths and ill-effects on health are preventable. Hospital-based studies from parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America suggest that the number of unsafe abortions is increasing in many areas. Dealing with the complications of unsafe abortion also produces a major drain on hospital resources, often at the expense of other maternity services.

D. Population distribution

1. Trends

85. Newly revised United Nations estimates indicate that at mid-1990, 43 per cent (2.28 billion) of the world population lived in urban areas and made up 34 per cent (1.4 billion) of the population of the less developed regions and 73 per cent (0.9 billion) of the population of the more developed regions (see figure VIII).

86. The level of urbanization is projected to rise to 48 per cent (2.96 billion) by 2000. United Nations projections further show that by 2025, that figure will have risen to over 60 per cent and will represent 57 per cent of the population of the less developed regions and 84 per cent of the population of the more developed regions.

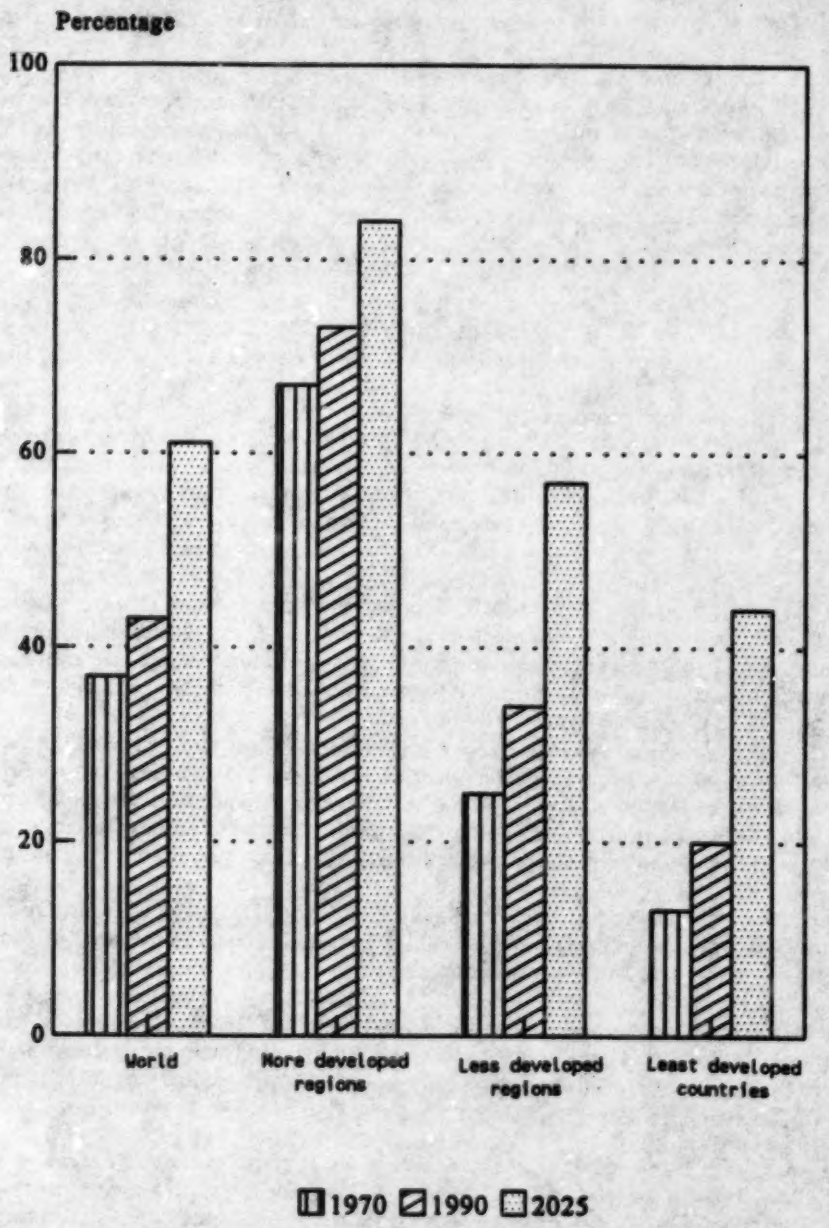
87. Urbanization patterns differ markedly between the more developed and the less developed regions. Thus, while the less developed regions are undergoing rapid urbanization, a process that is projected to continue for decades to come, in the more developed regions the urbanization process has slowed down.

88. By 2015, the level of urbanization in the less developed regions will have reached the 50 per cent mark; by 2025, it will have reached 57 per cent, comprising over 4 billion inhabitants.

89. The 47 least developed countries have both lower levels of urbanization and higher urban growth rates than the less developed regions as a whole. They are projected to have an urbanization level of 44 per cent by 2025, more than twice their 1990 level.

90. The current rate of growth of the urban population of the world for the most recent five-year period (1985-1990) is estimated at 2.7 per cent per annum (3.8 per cent in the less developed regions and 1 per cent in the more developed regions). That rate is expected to hover around the 2.5 per cent mark at the turn of the century, to decline during each of the next three quinquennial periods and to dip below 2 per cent for the first time in 2020-2025.

Figure VIII. Percentage of total population living in urban areas: 1970, 1990 and 2025



Source: World Urbanization Prospects: The 1992 Revision (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.XIII.11).

91. The rural population of the world is still growing larger and is expected to continue to do so - albeit in smaller and smaller increments - until 2015, when it should begin to decline slowly. The rural population is projected to increase from 3.0 billion in 1990 to 3.3 billion in 2025; rural growth rates are expected to decline from 1.1 per cent in 1985-1990 to -0.4 per cent in 2020-2025.

92. Differences between the more developed and the less developed regions are striking. Rates of rural growth have been negative in the more developed regions for four decades and that decline is expected to accelerate in future decades until it reaches a rate of -1.5 per cent in 2020-2025.

93. In the less developed regions, the absolute numbers of rural inhabitants is projected to continue to increase until 2015; nevertheless rates of increase have already begun to fall, from 2.2 per cent in 1965-1970 to 1.2 per cent in 1985-1990, and are expected to reach a negative rate of -0.3 in 2020-2025.

94. A significant proportion of the urban population of the world resides in large urban agglomerations. In 1990, 36 per cent of the world urban population resided in agglomerations of 1 million or more inhabitants and 15 per cent resided in agglomerations of 5 million or more.

95. Tokyo has been the largest urban agglomeration in the world since 1970 and is projected to remain so through 2010. Besides Tokyo, the 10 largest cities in the world in 1990 were Shanghai, Bombay and Seoul in Asia; Sao Paulo, Mexico City, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro in Latin America; and New York and Los Angeles in northern America. Their populations ranged from Tokyo's 25 million - the largest by far - to Rio's approximately 10 million.

96. The number of very large urban agglomerations - cities with a population of 10 million or more - is growing rapidly, especially in the less developed regions. By 2010, it is expected that 26 urban agglomerations will have 10 million or more inhabitants, 21 of those in the less developed regions. The less developed regions of Asia will be home to 14 of those very large cities; five will be in Latin America; and two will be in Africa.

97. Urban agglomerations situated in the less developed regions exhibit significantly higher growth rates as well as a larger range of rates than the more developed regions. For example, all of the following large cities in southern Asia have current growth rates of 3.5 per cent or more and are expected to maintain rates of about 3 per cent or higher until 2010: Bombay, Delhi, Karachi, Dacca, Lahore, Hyderabad and Bangalore. Other large cities which are expected to continue high rates of growth are Bangkok, Istanbul, Jakarta, Lagos, Metro Manila and Tehran.

98. The urban structure of a country can be seen as a rough measure of the level of development. The concentration of a country's population in a single very large city is known as primacy. Seven of the 26 largest urban agglomerations had more than 30 per cent of their country's urban population in 1990 - Bangkok, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Dacca, Lima, Metro Manila and Seoul; all those cities are in the less developed regions.

99. Discussion about urban places and urbanization frequently focuses on very large cities, but most people - even most urban people - do not live in the largest cities. In 1990, 64 per cent of all urban dwellers in the world lived in cities and towns with less than 1 million inhabitants.

2. Policies

100. In 1992, only 50 Governments out of 190 United Nations Member and observer States (26 per cent) considered their patterns of population distribution to be satisfactory (see table 12), while 140 (74 per cent) expressed dissatisfaction. Those figures, however, represent an improvement over the 1990 figures: only 32 of the 169 Member and observer States (19 per cent) were satisfied with their population distribution, while 137 (81 per cent) wanted change.

101. Governments of more developed countries were more likely to consider their distributional patterns to be satisfactory. Thirty-nine per cent of the more developed countries reported that their population distribution was satisfactory, against only 21 per cent of the less developed countries (28 of 134 countries). Nevertheless, the latter figure did represent an increase over the 1990 figure of 14 per cent.

102. Most of the Governments that expressed a desire for some change in their distribution patterns wanted major changes. Seventy-five of the 190 Governments (39 per cent) felt that their countries needed major changes. That was especially true in the developing countries: 68 of the 134 developing countries (51 per cent) were of the view that major distributional changes were necessary, compared with seven of the 56 developed countries (13 per cent). Thirty of the 47 least developed countries saw the need for major distributional changes and only five of those countries viewed their current patterns as satisfactory.

103. Twenty-seven of the 56 developed countries (48 per cent) felt that minor changes in their distribution patterns were appropriate, compared with 38 of the 134 developing countries (28 per cent).

104. Regional differences in Governments' perceptions were striking (see figure IX). African Governments showed the most dissatisfaction with population distribution: only 15 per cent considered current patterns satisfactory and 66 per cent expressed the desire for major changes in their distributional patterns. In northern and western Africa, not a single Government endorsed the status quo. Thirty-five of the 53 African Governments felt that major distributional changes were desirable.

105. Latin American Governments also showed dissatisfaction with their population distribution. While 27 per cent were satisfied with current patterns, 48 per cent felt that major changes were desirable. As to Asian Governments, 39 per cent desired major change, but a larger number (45 per cent) felt that minor changes would be sufficient. Six of the 38 Asian Governments considered their current population placement satisfactory.

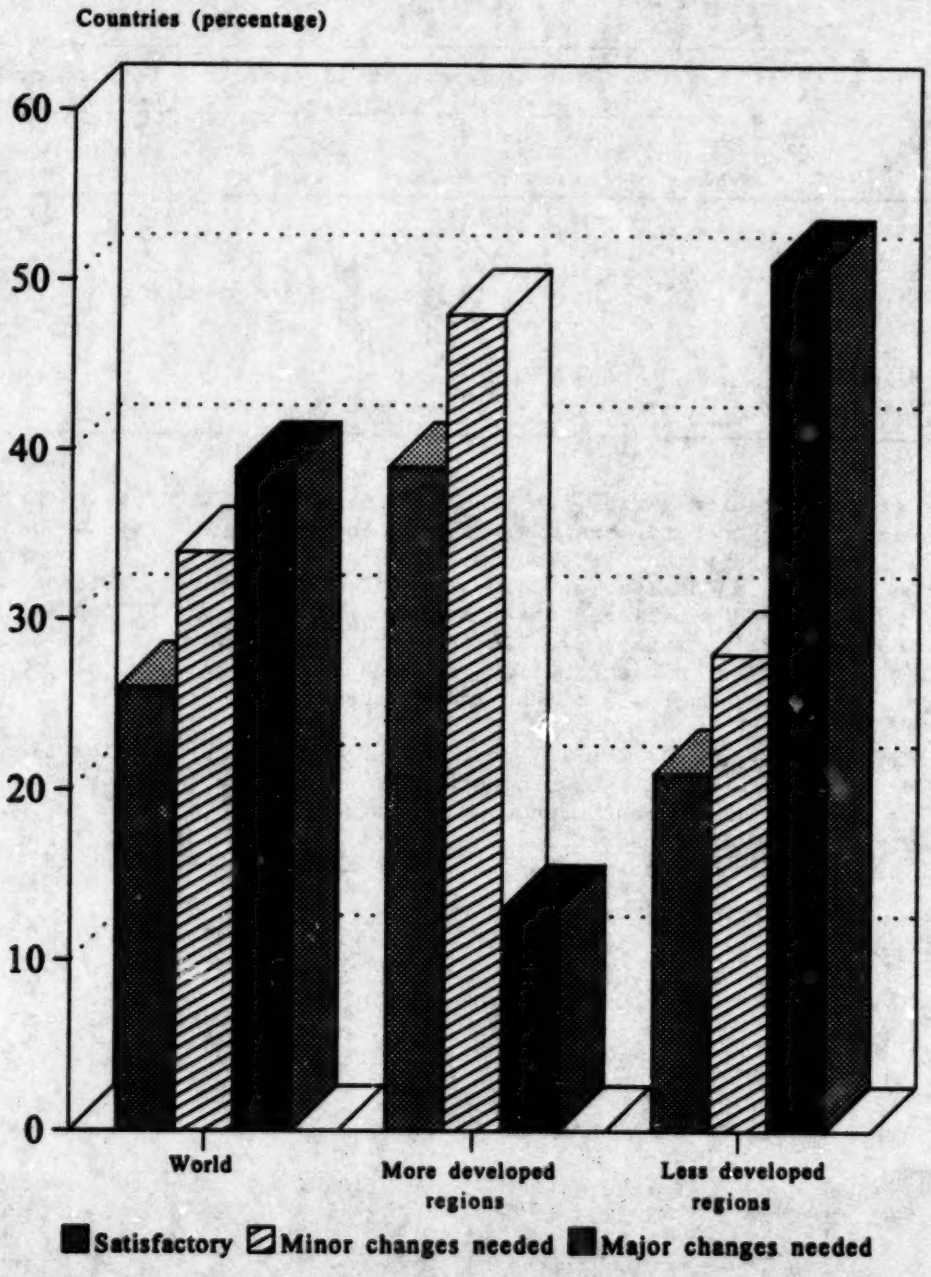
Table 12. Governments' perceptions concerning patterns of spatial distribution, by level of development, 1992

	World		More developed countries		Developing countries	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Satisfactory	50	26	22	39	28	21
Minor change desired	65	34	27	48	38	28
Major change desired	75	39	7	13	68	51
Total	190	100	56	100	134	100

106. Developed regions were less likely to find fault with their current patterns. In Europe, for example, 44 per cent of the Governments considered their current population distribution satisfactory. Of the 22 Governments that regarded changes as desirable, only six wanted major change. The two northern American Governments believed that their current patterns of population distribution were satisfactory. On the other hand, Japan was not satisfied with its current population distribution and wanted major changes, particularly with respect to the rapid growth of the Tokyo metropolitan area.

107. With regard to policies intended to influence internal migration, 64 per cent of the world's Governments have adopted policies designed to slow down or reverse the current trend, which is generally the movement of rural migrants to cities. Those policies are more likely to be in place in the developing countries, where urbanization is still proceeding rapidly.

Figure IX. Governments' views of appropriateness of spatial distribution, 1992



Source: Population Policy Data Bank maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

E. International migration

1. Trends

108. The 1980s witnessed sharp changes in migration trends world wide. Section I above, on refugees, indicated the changes taking place in relation to involuntary migration. The present subsection focuses on other types of migration flows, particularly those converging in the traditional areas of immigration, Asia and Europe.

109. Among the traditional countries of immigration, a major development was the increasing proportion of immigrants originating in Asian countries. Thus, during 1985-1989, Asians accounted for 41 per cent of the immigrants admitted by Australia, 44 per cent of those admitted by the United States of America and 48 per cent of those admitted by Canada. Europeans, who had accounted for a major proportion of immigrants to Australia and Canada until 1975, had seen their share drop to 31 and 24 per cent respectively by 1985-1989. In the United States, Asians surpassed the number of immigrants originating in the Americas.

110. All three countries of immigration saw their total immigrant intake rise between 1980-1984 and 1985-1989. During the 1980s as a whole, Australia admitted 1.1 million immigrants; Canada, nearly 1.3 million; and the United States, about 5.9 million. In addition, as a result of its Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, the United States regularized the status of nearly 2.5 million persons during 1989-1991. Persons originating in the Americas accounted for about 90 per cent of those regularized.

111. In Europe, available data on migration flows and on the stocks of foreigners present in selected countries indicate that the main receiving countries in the region experienced very low or even negative net migration during 1980-1984 but that net migration rose markedly in most countries during the second half of the decade. In the former Federal Republic of Germany, in particular, net migration rose from only 15,000 persons during 1980-1984 to nearly 1.9 million during 1985-1989. In both periods, gains of German citizens accounted for sizeable proportions of the total net migration gain. Indeed, during 1980-1984, the former Federal Republic of Germany recorded a net migration loss among foreigners, whereas German citizens accounted for a net migration gain of 161,000. Over the whole decade, Germany gained over 1.1 million citizens through migration. Such developments were made possible by the relaxation of restrictions on emigration in the countries of eastern Europe and by the fact that German law grants citizenship rights to persons of German descent living abroad, the so-called ethnic Germans. The German experience, though echoed by developments in other countries, was nevertheless exceptional in terms of volume: in other countries, the net migration gains recorded during the 1980s were considerably smaller, amounting to 263,000 in the Netherlands, 207,000 in Switzerland and 146,000 in Sweden. Furthermore, Belgium and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland registered net migration losses during the decade (see table 13).

Table 13. Average annual net migration of citizens and foreigners in six European countries, 1970-1974 to 1985-1989

(Thousands of persons)

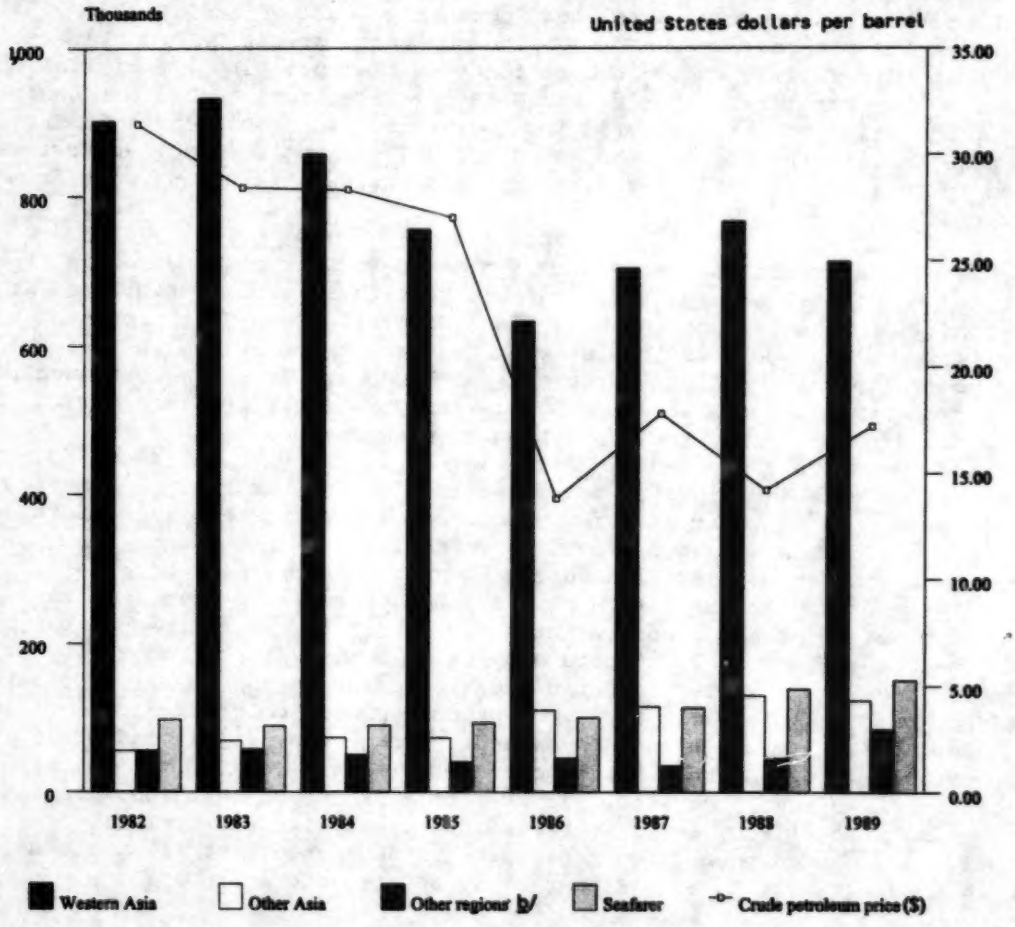
Receiving country	Migrant status	Average annual number of immigrants 1970-1974	1975-1979	1980-1984	1985-1989
Belgium	Citizens	-3.7	-4.2	-10.7	-9.3
	Foreigners	20.7	9.5	-0.1	7.6
	Total	17.1	5.3	-10.8	-1.7
Former Federal Republic of Germany	Citizens	9.2	38.7	32.2	193.1
	Foreigners	297.0	-32.4	-29.2	184.6
	Total	306.2	6.4	3.0	377.7
Netherlands	Citizens	4.0	5.7	-5.2	0.7
	Foreigners	24.0	32.2	22.6	34.4
	Total	28.0	37.8	17.5	35.1
Sweden	Citizens	-4.2	-1.5	-3.3	-2.9
	Foreigners	11.9	18.9	8.1	27.3
	Total	7.6	17.5	4.8	24.4
Switzerland	Citizens	..	..	3.0	7.8
	Foreigners	..	..	12.4	18.1
	Total	..	..	15.5	25.9
United Kingdom	Citizens	-92.0	-61.4	-62.2	-23.0
	Foreigners	41.8	40.4	34.8	47.2
	Total	-50.2	-21.0	-27.4	24.2

Source: Belgium, Institut National de Statistique, Annuaire Statistique de la Belgique, various years (Brussels); Federal Republic of Germany, Statistisches Bundesamt, Statistisches Jahrbuch, various years (Wiesbaden); Netherlands, Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, Jaarstatistiek van de Bevolking, various years (The Hague); Sweden, Statistika Centralbyran, Statistical Abstract of Sweden, various years (Stockholm); Switzerland, Bundesamt fur Statistik, Statistischer Jahrbuch der Schweiz, various years (Berne); United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Central Statistical Office, Annual Abstract of Statistics, various years (London).

112. Although the changes taking place in eastern Europe and the former USSR during the 1980s did contribute to increased emigration from the region, it was largely confined to the outflow of persons of Jewish, German, Armenian or Greek origin who either had external homelands where they could be admitted as immigrants or the backing of countries, such as France or the United States of America, that were willing to admit them for resettlement. It is estimated that the number of persons leaving the former USSR for resettlement abroad rose from 44,000 during 1981-1986 to 308,000 during 1987-1989. In 1990 alone a further 377,000 persons left the former USSR, some 185,000 of whom were Soviet Jews who resettled in Israel. In 1991, Israel admitted a further 150,000 persons from the former USSR.

113. In Asia, statistics on the number of migrant workers registering in their countries of origin before departure indicate that their number stabilized at about 1.1 million annually during the 1980s. However, those data represent only gross outflows, with some individuals being counted several times if their overseas contracts were of short duration. Although western Asia continued to be the main destination of Asian migrant workers, its share declined during the 1980s (see figure X). Thus, the proportion of workers heading to other destinations rose from 5 per cent in 1980-1984 to 11 per cent in 1985-1989. The new destinations of Asian migrant workers include Brunei Darussalam, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan Province of China. Because many of those new labour-importing countries lack provisions for allowing the admission of unskilled foreign workers, labour migration is increasingly occurring at the margin of the law. Japan, in particular, has become an attraction pole for undocumented migrants. It was estimated that by mid-1991 there were 160,000 foreigners staying illegally in that country. Furthermore, legal immigration to Japan also increased during the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly after an amendment to Japan's Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act entitled second- and third-generation descendants of Japanese emigrants to long-term residence permits. As a result, the Brazilian population in Japan rose from 15,000 in 1989 to over 56,000 in 1990, when the amendment came into effect, and rose further to nearly 120,000 by 1991. That year, the total foreign population registered in Japan stood at 1.2 million persons, a considerable increase from the 850,000 registered in 1985.

Figure X. Outflow of Asian migrant workers a/ by destination and price of crude petroleum, 1982-1989



Sources: World Population Monitoring, 1993 (United Nations publication, forthcoming); and UNCTAD Commodity Yearbook, 1991 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.91.II.D.9).

a/ Excluding workers from China, Myanmar, Nepal and Viet Nam.

b/ No data available for India.

2. Policies

114. Although only a few changes in international migration policies have been reported since the previous assessment contained in World Population Monitoring, 1991 (United Nations, 1992b), two political events have occurred which have had enormous impacts on recent global migratory movements and national policies. The first was the Gulf crisis, which precipitated the sudden departure of some 2 million migrants from Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States. The second was the rapid political changes in eastern Europe and the former USSR, which had dramatic economic, political and social consequences for both sending and receiving countries, as large numbers of people suddenly attempted to leave their countries of origin.

115. Relatively few modifications in policies dealing with international immigration have occurred since 1989. Most observed changes in immigration policies took place during the period 1986-1989, when the percentage of countries with policies to lower immigration rose from 19 to 32 per cent. Between 1989 and 1993, the percentage increased from 32 to 35 per cent. With respect to emigration policies, the situation actually reversed in recent years: the percentage of countries seeking to lower emigration fell from 25 to 20 per cent between 1989 and 1993. Based on the foregoing analysis, it appears that, despite the growing preoccupation with immigration and its consequences, only slightly more than one third of the Governments in the world want to lower the level of immigration. Furthermore, disaggregating the data by level of development does not lead to a different conclusion. Among the developed countries, the percentage with policies to lower immigration is 39 per cent, as opposed to 34 per cent for the developing countries. Similarly, in terms of emigration policies, the difference between developed and developing countries is slight, with 20 per cent of the developed countries having policies in place to lower emigration against 19 per cent of the developing countries.

116. An analysis derived from a comparison between Governments' immigration policies and the percentage of the population that is either of foreign birth or foreign nationality suggests that, while immigration policies are to some extent influenced by it, they are not simply a function of the relative size of the foreign population (see table 14). The median percentage of foreign-born inhabitants among countries with policies to raise immigration is 11.2 per cent; for countries that either wish to maintain immigration or do not intervene, it is 3.1 per cent; and for countries that seek to lower immigration, it is 3.9 per cent. However, those aggregate data mask to some extent the heterogeneity among countries sharing the same immigration policy. Disaggregating the data by country reveals that a particular immigration policy can encompass a wide range of relative sizes of the foreign-born population.

117. At the regional level, policies to lower immigration are most pervasive in Europe, where almost two thirds of the countries have such policies in place. Immigration policies in the receiving countries of Europe in the 1990s can be viewed as a reaction to two phenomena: the socio-economic gap between developed and developing countries, and the dramatic political and economic changes occurring in eastern Europe and the newly independent countries of the former USSR. European immigration policy to date has rested on three pillars. The first has consisted of policies that focus on stanching the growing influx of

Table 14. Governments' policies on immigration, by percentage of foreign-born inhabitants a/

(Number of countries)

	Policy on immigration			
	To raise	To maintain	To lower	Total
Foreign-born (percentage)				
Less than 5.0	2	43	25	70
5.0-10.0	1	12	5	18
10.1-30.0	2	8	9	19
More than 30.0	1	7	8	16
Number of countries	6	70	47	123
Mean	14.2	8.5	13.5	10.7
Median	11.2	3.1	3.9	3.7

Sources: United Nations Demographic Yearbook, various issues; and the Population Policy Data Bank maintained by the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat.

a/ Based on 123 developed and developing countries for which the percentage of the population, either of foreign birth or foreign nationality, was available.

asylum-seekers and undocumented immigrants from the developing countries, eastern Europe and the former USSR. The growing hostility and xenophobia towards immigrants in a number of host countries has provided an additional impetus to controlling the entry of immigrants. One manifestation of that concern was the convening of meetings in 1991 and 1992 to discuss the problem and propose solutions to the current and expected future influx. The second pillar of European immigration policy has consisted in Governments, concomitantly with the opening of borders among the member States of the European Community, attempting to harmonize their national policies on international migration and refugees by 1 January 1993, the beginning of the Single European Market. Finally, the third pillar of European immigration policy has consisted in continuing to facilitate the integration by host Governments of already resident immigrant groups.

118. Given the current economic and political environment, any liberalization of immigration policy in Europe in the near future appears unlikely. The combined pressures of a total unemployment rate that climbed to 9.4 per cent in 1992 for 17 countries of Europe (excluding eastern Europe) and a growing animosity to any relaxation of immigration controls on the part of the public will probably

relaxation of immigration controls on the part of the public will probably result in future immigration being limited to categories of highly skilled workers for which severe shortages have developed.

119. Among the other developed countries, Canada and the United States of America, both traditional receiving countries, have indicated satisfaction with their level of immigration, although Canada seeks to raise the level of permanent immigration, while the United States intends to maintain it. The goal of the United States Immigration Act of 1990 is to increase the competitiveness of the United States economy by admitting more highly skilled and highly educated immigrants, while preserving the emphasis on family reunification.

120. The breakup of the former USSR has transformed what was previously internal migration into international migration. Although the anticipated massive flow of immigrants from the former USSR has not materialized, with a combined population of 285 million people and some 130 ethnic groups, the area continues to hold a significant migration potential. A new law allowing anyone with a passport to emigrate was approved in principle in May 1991 and was scheduled to go into effect in January 1993. However, the substantial cost of the passport - the equivalent of three months' average wages - will pose a financial obstacle for many people.

121. In Africa, only Equatorial Guinea and Namibia seek to raise the level of immigration for permanent settlement. The largest number of Governments, 24, report that they do intervene, while 17 aim to lower the level and 10 want to maintain the flow of immigrants. In 1992, the recently independent Government of Namibia reported that it is relaxing immigration restrictions in order to encourage foreigners, mostly entrepreneurs and businessmen from Asia, to migrate and invest in the country.

122. Among the countries of the Latin America region, the majority of countries, 21 out of 33, either have policies to maintain the level of immigration or do not intervene. An interesting aspect of immigration policy in Latin America is the fact that three countries (Argentina, Guyana and Uruguay), report that they seek to raise the level of permanent immigration. Recalling earlier waves of European immigration to South America, a number of countries in the subregion are examining ways to facilitate the immigration of skilled workers from eastern Europe and the former USSR. One such plan, announced by Argentina in February 1992, proposes to encourage immigration from eastern and central Europe to Patagonia and other underpopulated regions of the country. The Government's plan also calls for the admission of 100,000 immigrants from the former USSR, to be funded in part by the European Community.

123. Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela are also examining ways to promote immigration. The Government of Chile is considering a plan to attract skilled immigrants from eastern Europe. In Venezuela, the Ministry of Planning is organizing the recruitment of 50,000 technicians from central and eastern European countries over the next five years, based on detailed requests from potential private-sector employers. Those immigrants selected will receive guaranteed employment, free transportation to Venezuela, a cash payment to help defray relocation costs and language training.

124. In Asia, migration is quite distinct from that of other regions in that it is (a) organized; (b) encouraged by the sending countries because of substantial remittances; and (c) marked by the growing incidence of both illegal migration and the proportion of young female workers among the migrants. Within the Asian region, there has been a significant growth in contract migration in the past decade, with estimates suggesting 1 million such workers in Asia and another 3 million in the Gulf. Among the labour-exporting countries, which consist of Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and Yemen, the Gulf crisis had severe consequences at both the national level and the level of individual migrants. Following the invasion of Kuwait, as many as 2 million Arab and Asian migrants were estimated to have returned to their countries of origin from Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf States. The loss in remittances to the labour-exporting countries was estimated at some US$ 750 million, which in turn contributed to a foreign-exchange crisis in several countries, especially Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

125. With respect to international migration policies in western Asia, the drive to reduce dependence upon foreign labour, already under way among many of the labour-importing countries in the late 1980s, has intensified in the wake of the Gulf war. The Government of Kuwait, fearing that it had become overly dependent upon foreign labour (60 per cent of the population was composed of foreigners in 1985), began promoting the employment of Kuwaitis in the private sector in 1989. Following the country's liberation in 1991, former non-national residents were permitted to remain or return, subject to much stricter controls on their employment. In an attempt to promote Omanization and reduce the proportion of expatriates, Oman issued new regulations in 1992, providing the private sector with unprecedented incentives to train Omanis, including grants covering 50-80 per cent of trainee salaries.

126. In Oceania, only New Zealand has a policy to raise the current level of immigration; while one country seeks to lower the level (Federated States of Micronesia), two countries report no intervention (the Marshall Islands and Vanuatu) and the remaining nine countries seek to maintain the level.

III. POPULATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: LAND, FORESTS AND WATER

127. Arguments for reducing rates of population growth, advocated mostly on the grounds that high rates impede socio-economic development, have received an added dimension: safeguarding the global environment. Population factors are increasingly considered within the context of the many forces that affect the environmental resource base upon which sustainable development ultimately depends.

128. In the developed countries, much if not all of the environmental stress is derived from production and consumption patterns and technology; as a result, the link with population is exceedingly weak. But in the developing countries, claims on the basic renewable natural resources of arable land, forests and water, fuelled by the rapid population growth of recent decades, have often outstripped the regenerative capacities of those resources. In an increasing

number of cases, population pressure is being found to be linked with the increase in cultivated land; the redistribution of prime arable land to non-farm use in the process of urbanization; the fragmentation of landholdings; the clearing of forest land by migrants; the intensification of agricultural production in ways that are associated with the deterioration of the quality of the land; and land conflicts.

129. During the period from 1977-1979 to 1987-1989, in spite of intense downward pressure on cropland from increasing non-agricultural uses and massive losses of arable land due to erosion, cropland areas grew by 0.8 per cent in Asia, 4.4 per cent in Africa and 10.9 per cent in South America. As sites with good land tend to be cultivated first, land extensification increasingly requires the use of marginal lands, i.e., lowland rain forests, steep slopes or semi-arid lands. Although potentially arable land is relatively abundant in Latin America and Africa and parts of south Asia, much of it either has very poor soils, is situated in areas of extremely adverse hydrological conditions or presents exceptional health risks.

130. Despite land extensification, the inequality of land distribution remains a pervasive problem. Landlessness is widespread, with the percentages of agricultural households that are landless estimated to be 17 in Latin America, 11 in the Middle East, 15 in south Asia and 6.5 in Africa. Even more important, smallholder households, whose landholdings are too small to provide a sustainable livelihood, comprise about 60 per cent of agricultural households in the developing countries as a group. The high percentage of smallholder households is largely the result of rapid population growth under the norms of partible inheritance of land that are typical for most developing countries, which have contributed to the fragmentation of agricultural holdings. Population-driven land fragmentation characterizes many developing countries and has been documented for Bangladesh, Burundi, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Malawi, Nepal, Rwanda and south-eastern Nigeria. To the extent that land fragmentation is not matched by the introduction of intensive and environmentally sustainable agricultural techniques (e.g., inter-cropping), the farmers with exceedingly small plots are forced to either "mine" their land by shortening fallow, cutting remaining trees etc., or migrate and engage in ecologically destructive practices of land extensification on marginal lands where soil and climatic conditions are poorly suited to annual cropping.

131. Traditional agricultural practices have also been challenged by population growth. For example, in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, agro-ecological conditions and low population densities formerly assured the sustainability of shifting cultivation and transhumance within the framework of the customary rules of community landownership and the allocation of use rights to members of the community. In recent decades, however, the most central element of that agricultural system - the ability to shift around on the land within the confines of the community - has been undermined by population pressure, creating land shortages and conflicts.

132. Much is made of the role of population growth in deforestation, in particular the deforestation of moist tropical forests, which cover more than 1.5 billion hectares and are the richest ecosystems in biomass and biodiversity to be found on land. About two thirds of the tropical forests are located in

Latin America, with the remainder split between Africa and Asia. It is estimated that tropical deforestation was proceeding at a rate of 17 million to 20 million hectares per annum in the late 1980s, i.e., approximately 0.9 per cent per annum. While the demand for land of increasing numbers of landless or small-scale farmers is often seen as a driving force in the destruction of tropical moist forests, the most important causes of tropical deforestation are commercial logging in Africa and south-east Asia and cattle ranching in Central and Latin America. Besides the direct damage they inflict on forests, logging and ranching are also instrumental in making it possible for the landless, the unemployed and the small-scale farmers to settle in the tropical moist forests. Tropical rain forests are exceedingly difficult to penetrate under normal conditions, but access roads cleared for logging and ranching operations have opened up large segments of the tropical rain forests that were previously inaccessible to individuals for staking out a plot of land.

133. Cutting down trees for firewood is also a major cause of deforestation in tropical dry forests and non-forest wooded areas located near dense human settlements in Africa and south Asia. The people who face fuelwood shortages are mostly the rural poor who live in low rainfall, poor soil, scrub and semi-desert areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America. About 1.3 billion people live in areas where fuelwood is consumed faster than trees can regrow: 70 million in North Africa and west Asia; 145 million in the dry parts of Latin America; 130 million in sub-Saharan Africa, mainly in savannah areas in the west, centre and south-east of the continent; and 710 million in the countryside and small towns of Asia, mainly in the great plains of the Indus and Ganges rivers and in south-east Asia. While rapid population growth contributes considerably to the increase in demand for fuelwood, the consumption of fuelwood is in large part a function of income: it declines as household income and city size increase, implying that continued income growth and urbanization will reduce that source of pressure on forests. However, in many countries, the situation may worsen in the short to medium term, because urban dwellers are increasingly relying on charcoal.

134. While global annual water withdrawals equal about 10 per cent of the total renewable supply, water is already a scarce resource in many parts of the world. Some 80 countries with 40 per cent of the world population suffer from serious water shortages. The bulk of world water use is claimed by irrigated agriculture, which accounts for about 70 per cent of total withdrawals. Rates of water use are expected to continue to increase well into the next century, led by still increasing rates of irrigation in many parts of the world. Projections made by hydrologists indicate that meeting demands by 2000 could require virtually all the usable freshwater supplies in northern Africa and western Asia.

Notes

1/ United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

2/ Including male and female sterilization; intra-uterine devices (IUDs); the pill; injectable and implantable hormonal contraceptives; condoms; and female barrier methods - diaphragm, cervical cap, spermicidal foams, creams, jellies and sponges.